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# REACHING THE CHILDREN

HENRY C. KREBS



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# REACHING THE CHILDREN

A BOOK FOR TEACHERS  
AND PARENTS

BY

HENRY C. KREBS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, SOMERSET COUNTY  
NEW JERSEY

*WITH INTRODUCTION BY*

CALVIN N. KENDALL, LL.D.

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF NEW JERSEY



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## INTRODUCTION

"TRAIN up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it" was said long ago. This counsel is a constant reminder of the duty of teachers and parents.

The present century has been aptly called the children's century. Increasing reverence for childhood is one of its dominant characteristics. This reverence is both the cause and the effect of a better understanding of children. Never before were so many earnest men and women giving their best thought and effort to a study of children as at present. They profoundly realize that children are the greatest of the potential assets of a community or of a state.

The practice of good schools and of well ordered homes in training children has been modified as a result of the better understanding of children. So far as the school is concerned, there is a growing conviction that the child does not exist for the school but that the school exists for the child; a conviction that the child has his own way of feeling, thinking, and doing, which is not the way of men and women of forty. As Saint Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things." There is also a conviction that the individual child is becoming more and more the center

of educational interest and effort, and that his actual present need, rather than his probable future need, should be emphasized.

Bearing these considerations in mind, any well thought out contribution to the means that may be employed for the training of children is to be welcomed, and Superintendent Krebs has made such a contribution in this little book. The contribution is a practical one. Mr. Krebs for many years has had the opportunity of working with teachers, particularly with those in the rural and town schools. The book is therefore the outgrowth of experience and not the mere expression of theories. The title, "Reaching the Children," is a good one. To reach them is not easy, but to reach them is essential if educational processes are to be effective. Indeed, the failure of some of our educational activities in both the school and the home may be traced to a failure to understand the mind and the heart of children.

In a series of twenty chapters Mr. Krebs points out for the use of teachers and parents some of the ways of reaching children. No teacher, however inexperienced, and no mother or father, after reading this interesting book carefully, will regard the child and the ways of training him in quite the same way as before. The contribution deserves a wide reading in both the school and the home, the two institutions upon which so much depends.

CALVIN N. KENDALL,  
*Commissioner of Education*

April, 1916, TRENTON, N. J.

# REACHING THE CHILDREN

## CHAPTER I

### *THE AIM*

So manifold is the opportunity, so open is the road of the higher success to ability, industry, and character, that human life may fairly be described as a divine chance to do and to be that which lies in the imagination of youth. God does not deceive the fresh, instinctive faith of childhood; life does not lie to those who trust its promises. It is commonplace only to those whose natures, tastes, and aims are commonplace. — HAMILTON W. MABIE.

Scorn trifles, lift your aims; do what you are afraid to do. Sublimity of character must come from sublimity of motive. — MARY EMERSON.

WHAT is the chief purpose of the school? What should be the primary aim of the teacher? These are fundamental questions. On their correct answer depends the attitude of the teacher and of parents, and the attitude governs the results.

The central principle of education is the self-activity of the child. To this principle all others are subservient. Without the self-activity of the child little can be accomplished. There is no reaction to the instruction. There is no growth, no development.

In the light of this principle the purpose of the school is plain. It is to arouse the self-activity of

the child and guide this activity into right channels. The aim of the teacher should be to inspire the pupils, and to the degree in which she succeeds in doing this is her success measured.

Proficiency in school work may be secured by a teacher who drives her pupils through threat of punishment. This proficiency is, however, of little value because it is not based on the pupil's self-activity. It is based merely on the pupil's activity, which is a totally different matter. Activity that does not originate in the pupil has no permanent qualities.

It is to be feared that many teachers are satisfied if they can secure quiet in their schoolrooms and a reasonable degree of good work in school subjects. This may or may not mean good results in the lives of the pupils. The measure is the degree of self-activity that is involved in the process. A child who is a poor penman but full of energy and ambition may become a Horace Greeley; while the good penman without such qualities may never rise above the commonplace.

The discerning visitor to a schoolroom will therefore look through and beyond the things that meet the eye and the ear. He will not only look for good performances, but for the principle underlying them. Is the teacher reaching her pupils? Does she inspire them? Is her teaching such as to arouse their self-activity? If so, the work is fundamentally good, and if not, the work is essentially poor, however brave the show.

If the purpose of the teacher and the school as thus stated is accepted, several deductions follow.

In the first place, extensive learning, though very valuable, is not indispensable to the teacher. There are some who are so interested in subject matter that they lose sight of the pupil who is being taught. The broader the education of the teacher the greater the danger of falling into this error. When a teacher of profound scholarship has also the right attitude toward children, she becomes a conspicuously great teacher.

But there are hundreds of instances of persons of very mediocre attainments in scholarship who have nevertheless produced remarkable results through their enthusiasm. That they would have been greatly aided by scholarship is freely admitted; but in spite of that handicap their effectiveness in reaching the children is noteworthy.

In an obscure country school in Pennsylvania there taught a teacher who had difficulty in working the problems in an ordinary elementary arithmetic. He would often say to his pupils, "For to-morrow we will try the next five problems. I will work as many as I can myself, and we may be able to get the rest together." This very inefficiency of the teacher proved a blessing to the pupils, because they were thrown on their own resources. But this teacher was filled with enthusiasm and earnestness. He could point out the way even if he could not travel it himself; and from that small, remote school came no less than twenty-three college graduates, many of whom have gained distinction in the professions, as well as men who have become markedly successful in business. After his retirement, fifty of these men

gathered to pay homage to the teacher who had given them their inspiration toward success. This teacher could show no high grade certificates or diplomas, possessed no degrees, knew little of the field of learning, but he had *reached the children*.

Pestalozzi founded our system of popular education. His own methods of teaching are said to have been crude. He talked too much during a recitation — gave the children little opportunity to express themselves; but he was so full of enthusiasm for the work and so permeated with love for the children that he reached the hearts of all, and stimulated them to a remarkable degree.

In the second place, teachers will carefully consider their methods of teaching and the incentives placed before the pupils, and will ask themselves whether these are such as will arouse an abiding interest in the hearts of the children, or whether their influence will pass away with the ending of school days. They will carefully use the many avenues of approach to the interests of the children until some way is found that leads to their hearts. Children will no longer be considered merely as pupils to be taught, but as individuals to be studied and helped as may be necessary. Good teaching demands not only learning and pedagogy, but also psychology in its broadest sense.

Instead, then, of having a superficial view of the profession, the teacher should consider it of profound importance.

It requires all the elements of heart and mind that any one can possess. It is the most responsible work that can engage the human mind. It puts to

the test all the tact and judgment and courage that are in the teacher. Its results are so far reaching for good that no one can even estimate their value. And there is so much opportunity for leaving things undone — for fatal omissions — that no one can estimate the possible loss. Teachers often fail to appreciate the significance of this work, but begin it as a matter of mere occupation instead of a means of effective service. They do not know how to teach, nor why they teach. Our State authorities are wisely raising their standards of certification; and it is hoped that the time is not far distant when at least some training for teaching may be required of all applicants, and the entirely unprepared teacher may be excluded.

It is the purpose of the following chapters to point out specific means of reaching the children. It is believed that with sufficient insight all can be reached. What appeals to one may not appeal to another. The teacher must have all these means consciously in mind, and must employ them judiciously in accordance with the disposition of each child.

Many teachers of good purposes have failed to be completely successful because their aims lacked definiteness. Their ambition was to do good to the children; but they did not set forth their purposes in detail or employ them with exactness and forethought.

The physician may have a perfect attitude toward his work, but he nevertheless needs detailed and specific knowledge of medicine in order to cure his patients. This is true of all professions, and of all



lines of business. So, in the work of teaching, a merely good person will be of little usefulness unless she is skilled in the art of discovering and employing the means that will accomplish the chief aim of the school — arousing the ambition of pupils, and directing it in the right channel.

## CHAPTER II

### *THE TEACHER AS INSPIRER*

How shall he give kindling in whose own inward man there is no live coal, but all is burnt out to a dead grammatical cinder? — CARLYLE.

The school is the manufactory of humanity. — CONFUCIUS.

He who honestly instructs reverences God. — MOHAMMED.

The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself. — BULWER-LYTTON.

There is no human life so poor and small as not to hold many a divine possibility. — JAMES MARTINEAU.

LOWELL says of Emerson that "he had the supreme power of fertilizing other minds." Longfellow spent several days with Emerson, and on his return wrote poetry with great intensity for many weeks. No American writer has had so much influence on thought in this country as Emerson. He was the great inspirer of America. Many obscurities may be found in his prose writings, and some of his poems are said to have no beginning, or middle, or end. Nevertheless they arouse the reader, and set him on fire with ambition, thus doing what the mere rhetorician can never accomplish through a faultless style.

This is what Emerson says of teaching: "The greatest enterprise in the world, for splendor, for extent, is the up-building of a man." He also says

elsewhere that the value of a country should be measured neither by the census nor the crops, but by the kind of men it produces.

The great names of the past are the names of inspirers. Who is the greatest navigator in all history? Christopher Columbus. Did he make the longest or quickest voyage in the world? No. Did he sail the largest ship in the world? No—he made a slow voyage in three miserable ships. And the results of his voyages would have been meager indeed if his example had not inspired others to continue and develop his enterprise.

Who is the greatest scientist of modern times? Charles Darwin. Did he know more science than any one else? No—Spencer and Tyndall and Huxley knew much more than he did. But Darwin gave a marvelous impulse to thought by his epoch-making book “*The Origin of Species*.” Other scientists merely advanced and developed the ideas he originated; and his place of supremacy is sure.

The greatest novelist in English literature is Samuel Richardson. Almost no one now reads the nine volumes that make up his novel “*Clarissa Harlowe*”; and comparatively few have read “*Pamela*.” Thackeray and Dickens have written better novels, but Richardson *founded* the school of sentimental fiction, and the founder is always greater than the successor.

David Hume ranks highest as historian of England because he founded the literary school of historical writing that reached its height in Froude, Green, Freeman, and Macaulay.

Horace Mann was never superintendent of the

largest city in America, nor was he State Superintendent; but his name will rank first in American educational history because he "blazed the way" in the glorious enterprise of improving school systems.

In colonial history we know the names of those who founded the colonies, but the names of their successors are obscure.

These illustrations have been brought forward in corroboration of Emerson's statement that the up-building of man is the greatest enterprise in the world. We teachers are engaged in this wonderful work; and if we reach the pupils and send them forth to live noble and useful lives and perhaps to make great names for themselves *we* are nevertheless the *authors* of their success, and in that sense the credit of their achievements is ours.

It is of course true that the name of the teacher is often unknown to the world when the name of the pupil is famous. But what of that? The fact remains, whether known or unknown.

One of the most mischievous ideas in the minds of some people is that publicity is necessary to greatness—that a man's success in life is measured by the number of times his name appears in the newspapers. This may be fame, but it is not necessarily success or greatness. The quiet, unobtrusive worker may set in motion forces that will revolutionize the world. Name and fame are nothing — results are everything.

The teacher who inspires her pupils is on the same plane with all other persons in the world's history who inspired others. If she sends forth pupils full of ambition she has accomplished immeasurable re-

sults. No one can estimate the extent of her influence. What a splendid opportunity the teacher's work thus presents! To play a conspicuous part in making the world better, to be the fountain of a stream of influence that will broaden and deepen as it flows for generations to come — a teacher is hopeless if this prospect does not lift her up and inspire her soul with zeal and energy and a determination that will transform her life and her work.

The story in Genesis tells how man was made in the image of God; but he was mere clay until God breathed into him the breath of life. Only then did he become a living soul.

There are some communities in which it seems as if the only life were physical. There are few signs of intellectual and moral and spiritual life. Yet the capacity for these higher qualities is there, and when once the big, strong, virile physical becomes transformed by a great idea, there is no end to the heights to which the individual may attain. The soil is there — it needs seed and fertilizer to produce crops.

"My people perish for lack of knowledge," said the prophet. Persons in remote communities, living on a low plane, are benighted simply because they do not know any better. How can they? Children see and hear and think naught but the low ideals in which they are brought up. This is generally true in all states of society. The children are not to blame for their conditions. They cannot control the place nor the circumstances into which they are born. Yet they may be just as capable as the children of the most favored. Of any two children in the world no

one can tell which will do the greater service to mankind.

Into such a community the inspiring teacher comes as a being from another sphere. She brings to the children glimpses of a new world. Without directly condemning the barren wastes in which the people live she will point out the green fields and the babbling brooks of the new country. The children will come to feel that they need not live in this lowly condition all their lives, but may advance to something better. This is truly a great opportunity for the teacher.

Backward communities are precisely those in which inspiring teachers are most needed; and yet the schools in such localities are often the refuge for such teachers as no other community wants. When a teacher cannot, because of lack of qualifications, get a desirable school she takes as a last resort what is generally considered an undesirable school; and because this school has a lowly reputation some teachers feel that "anything goes." They see no call for skill in teaching and management. The children are of a low class, and so they will remain. Because there are but ten children in this school the work is not worth while; yet Abraham Lincoln attended such a school, and he alone was worth while.

Young teachers usually and very properly get the most desirable positions they can; but a higher motive is to seek the position in which one can do the most good. Surely there are more opportunities for valuable service in backward districts where the teacher is the only light in the community than there

are in a city where there are hundreds of influences that make for enlightenment.

When a teacher deliberately elects to teach in a backward community, not only will she *do* more good than elsewhere, but she will *get* more good than elsewhere. Giving inspiration to others always reacts on the giver. Doing a noble work in any community exalts the character of the doer. Mrs. Ballington Booth, whose life is spent in reclaiming criminals, has a light in her face that would not be there if she were living the life of ordinary society. Missionaries returning from heathen lands have a "something" in their personality that distinguishes them in a crowd. This "something" is one of the worth while things of life; and the teacher who breathes inspiration into a school and into a community stamps her features and her character with the mark of a great accomplishment.

### CHAPTER III

#### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH THE CLASS RECITATION

The greatest poet is not he who has done the best; it is he who suggests the most. — EMERSON.

IN all schools pupils recite their lessons. The teacher spends the greater part of each day in conducting recitations; and her daily preparation is devoted largely to the work of the recitation.

Teachers and pupils sometimes take the recitation period so much as a matter of course that they are not conscious of the momentous character of this part of the school day. Years ago the current idea of the recitation was that the teacher should tell pupils some facts and at another time the pupils should *recite* them — that is, should “tell them back” to the teacher. Or the teacher would assign several pages in the book and the recitation would consist in giving these *back* to the teacher. Sometimes the teacher would do knitting while the class was reciting, following the pages with her eye and punishing those who failed to recite verbatim.

This was, of course, a wholly inadequate idea of the worth and purpose of the recitation. A great step in advance was taken when Dr. E. E. White taught that the objects of the recitation are to test,



to drill, and to instruct. Unless, however, we are willing to give to the word *instruct* a very broad construction, we must, in the light of the central purpose of this book, add one more element to the recitation, and that is *to inspire*.

The recitation period is therefore an *opportunity* period. It presents the occasion for the interaction of the mind of the teacher and the minds of the pupils. The assigned lessons are merely the basis for this play of mind on mind. They afford the material of thought. But the electrical connection is necessary before these materials produce light. Otherwise they are dead matter.

Every well taught lesson inspires pupils. If the teacher has a fund of scholarship, if she has assembled the information and other material for the lesson of the day, has organized it and vivified it by special preparation, her class will receive an interest in the subject, a desire to know more in regard to it, and a glow of enthusiasm that will weld the impressions into permanent forms; and if the lesson contains a spiritual element, the pupils will attain to higher standards, and form higher ideals.

It is said that when John S. C. Abbott was engaged in writing his "Life of Napoleon," he knelt down in his library every morning before beginning his work to seek divine guidance. The opportunity for reaching the children through the recitation is so great, and its neglect so disastrous, that the teacher should not undertake it without at least some sense of the solemn duty of the hour to make the recitation effective for inspiration as well as for instruction.

Pupils should be given a realizing sense of the dignity of the recitation period. In many classrooms some pupils remain at their seats to study. These latter should clearly understand that they must do nothing whatever that might interrupt the recitation. No hands should be raised, no questions asked, no noise be made, that might attract the attention of either teacher or pupils. The teacher must give her undivided attention to the pupils reciting; otherwise the connection of interest will be broken, and the effect of the recitation lost.

Teachers have been known to start a class in oral reading and then go among the pupils not reciting and give help here and there, thus taking their attention from the reading lesson. This is, of course, vitally wrong. This makes oral reading a purely mechanical exercise. There can be no interaction of mind on mind unless all are attentive to the work in hand. Such a teacher will never realize the possibilities of the recitation period.

Another main reason why the recitation period is not inspiring has already been suggested. It is because the teacher does not possess fulness of knowledge in regard to the lesson. Very rarely should a teacher have a book in her hand during a recitation period. Her eyes should be on the pupils. There must be a direct connection between mind and mind. The book breaks the connection.

Many recitation periods are of little value because of the wrong method of conducting them. In oral reading lessons the teacher asks a pupil to rise and read, and tells the others to "watch for mistakes."

When the pupil has read the paragraph, the hands of the others are all raised. "What mistake did you see, John?" asks the teacher. "She repeated!" says John, with a note of satisfaction in his voice because he was sharp enough to detect an error. "She said *the* for *a*!" says Mary, with equal triumph. "Didn't hold her book in the left hand!" is Charley's sage suggestion. And so the process goes on, a pure waste of time, a frittering away of the precious minutes of the recitation, not an iota of good accomplished. No wonder children receive no impetus from such fatuous performances. Yet such recitations occur every day in every state in the Union. We are still far from grasping the significance of the recitation period.

No recitation period is of value unless some things are definitely clinched. When the pupils take their seats they must be conscious of a definite acquisition. They must have a solid foundation for further study. They can only be reached if they themselves feel that they have learned something, have taken a distinct step in advance in the process of gaining knowledge. There is much unconscious development in the school, but there is also much that the pupil must clearly realize. He will not be likely to take an interest in school, or be susceptible to uplifting influences, if the school exercises seem to him mere "marking time," mere routine, mere things that must be done because this is school. Here we have drudgery, not work. There is no oxygen in this atmosphere — only distilled air, that can neither give life, nor sustain life.

What a delight it is to watch a teacher conduct a

recitation when she is thoroughly prepared and knows how to teach! The pupils are eager. She leads them through pleasant paths. Her knowledge is fresh and clear. Every question has a purpose. She is master of the whole situation. There is electricity in the air. When the period is over the pupils have gained something. They have made a distinct acquisition. They have had a valuable intellectual exercise. They have a new interest in the subject. They are anxious to pursue it further.

On the other hand, how disappointing it is to see a teacher waste her opportunities through failure to prepare her lesson properly! She can do little but refer to the book. There is no mental action and reaction, no interest. No love of learning is enkindled, no permanent impressions are made. It is needless to say that such a teacher is no inspirer; and it is distressing to feel that thousands of children are compelled to sit under such teaching and waste their precious days that might otherwise be rich in preparation for life.

A school stands or falls if the recitation period is a success or a failure. This period is the intellectual crisis of the school day, and it is often the moral crisis. It determines not only whether the lesson of the day shall be of value, but whether a permanent interest in that study and in all studies shall be engendered. Hence in reaching the children this period cannot be overestimated. It behooves all teachers who seek to inspire their pupils to take careful thought as to how this phase of the school work may be made a potent minister to that end.

## CHAPTER IV

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH THE SCHOOL LIBRARY*

A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. — MILTON.

The true university of these days is a collection of books. — CARLYLE.

In the best books great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours. — CHANNING.

WHEN reading the lives of great men and women, one is struck by the fact that nearly all of them were inspired more or less by a book or by several books. This is not at all surprising when one considers what a book really is. "Great books are the life-blood of master spirits," says Milton; and this sums up their value. By reading great books we gain this life-blood for ourselves through transfusion, mysterious, but real.

If the newspapers were to announce some fine morning that from ten to twelve that day a reception would be held at which the public were invited to meet William Shakespeare, Martin Luther, and Napoleon Bonaparte, all work would be dropped, and everybody would hasten to shake hands with these great men. If John Milton were to call on us and spend two hours in our sitting-room, we should consider ourselves honored for life by the favor. As a matter of fact, Mil-

ton, Shakespeare and the rest are now in our homes. They are ready to talk to us night and day. They are never too tired to give us their best thoughts. And yet, instead of appreciating this wonderful opportunity, we too often let them rest on the shelves and occupy ourselves in talking with commonplace people. We "gossip with the stable-boy," when in our houses "kings and queens" are waiting for us, as John Ruskin puts it.

Great books contain the finest things that the greatest minds in the history of the world have been able to put on paper. Certainly any one who has any serious purpose in life must feel the need of being instructed by those greater than himself. Deliberately to put aside these priceless teachings as not worthy of time and attention is to arrogate to oneself a conceit that is hard to justify. What can be thought of the intellectual capacity of one who has time to read current fiction, but no time for the really great things in literature? Likewise what shall we say of a person who spends hours learning to play a two-step on the piano, but has not a minute to give to the study of fine music? In too many departments of life we are guilty of false valuations. We count that which is worthless as more valuable than that which is precious.

If the teacher is imbued with a sense of the value of literature, she will not only enrich her own life thereby but will use her utmost endeavor to spread its influence among her pupils. This cannot be well done unless there is careful planning and forethought on the subject. In other words the teacher should pre-

pare herself for the proper use of the school library in the same manner as she prepares herself to teach the regular lessons. The best results cannot be secured by a mere passing attention to the use of the library. There must be a study of each child's interests. There must be a knowledge of the contents of all the books in the library. There must be skill in inducing each child to read what is best for him. This is a task worthy of the best efforts of the teacher, and if accomplished it may result in more actual good to the child than all the rest of the school work combined.

The following suggestions may assist teachers in this work:

1. Impress on the pupils the value of good literature, as indicated in the first part of this chapter.

2. Show the effect of certain great books on individuals. Lincoln as a boy had a library of surpassing value — the Bible, Shakespeare, Fox's Book of Martyrs, Weems's Life of Washington, Pilgrim's Progress, and Æsop's Fables. These books gave him a matchless literary style. They filled his mind with noble thoughts, which not only stimulated ambition but kept out the mean and low. They built up in him a moral fiber that made his character great. Indeed, these books gave us Abraham Lincoln. Without them, it is altogether likely that he would have remained a railsplitter.

Benjamin Franklin was powerfully influenced by reading Cotton Mather's "Essays to Do Good."

Loyola was a wild, profane, irreligious soldier. While in a hospital recovering from a wound he called

for a book to pass away the time. The only book to be found was the "Lives of the Saints." This book completely changed the life of Loyola. He became an enthusiastic Christian, and founded the order of Jesuits, whose influence has been great not only in religion, but in history.

Martin Luther read the life of John Huss, the religious reformer, and was thereby encouraged in his own career.

Carey, the missionary, had his work marked out for him by reading the voyages of Captain Cook; while Wolff became a great missionary through reading the life of St. Francis Xavier.

Henry Ward Beecher often said that he was never quite the same man again after he had read the works of John Ruskin.

"My opportunities in youth for acquiring an education were limited," said Daniel Webster, "but I had the great good fortune of being well supplied with useful books, and these gave me my start in life."

Henry Clay wrote, "A wise mother and good books enabled me to succeed in life. She was very poor, but never too poor to buy the proper books for her children."

Alfieri was a great Italian poet; but he would have lived a commonplace life had not his ambition been stirred by the reading of Plutarch. This remarkable book has inspired many of our great men, notably Montaigne, Napoleon Bonaparte, Benjamin Franklin, Daniel Webster, Alexander Hamilton, Emerson, Phillips Brooks, Edward Everett, Lew Wallace, and William E. Gladstone.



3. Make frequent references to the books in the library. Draw illustrations therefrom. For instance, if a volume of Du Chaillu's African experiences is in the library, or Baker's "Cast Up by the Sea," and Africa is being studied in the geography class, the teacher can draw her illustrations from these books, and thus arouse a desire in the pupils to read them. In the same way Scott can be approached. In history the field is much wider. If properly taught American history will at every point lead to an interest in the great men and women whose names are met on its pages, and a desire to read their biographies.

The reading lesson is the medium of approaching good literature. One poem by Longfellow naturally leads to another by the same writer. A part of a long poem should stimulate pupils to read the whole. A professor of English once said that in his opinion the finest eulogy on music is to be found in the following lines from Milton's *Comus*:

"Scylla wept,  
And chid her barking waves into attention,  
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause."

This statement led at least some members of the class not only to seek a knowledge of Scylla and Charybdis, but to study the whole poem.

If pupils are told that Dumas' "The Three Musketeers" is the finest romance ever written, they will sit up and take notice. A prominent lawyer once stated that in his judgment the best thing Dickens ever wrote was "Martin Chuzzlewit." This led at least one of his hearers to read it at his first opportunity.

The expression of interest and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher is thus the means of arousing curiosity and interest in the books of the library. If these books are not read, it is usually due to the neglect of the teacher. It is demonstrable that nearly all pupils are interested in the things in which the teacher is interested. They will not have their hearts in anything in which the teacher does not have her heart. Perfunctory teaching never aroused an interest in anything.

4. New books should be added to the library from time to time. This in itself arouses interest. If new books cannot be bought, exchanges can be made with neighboring schools, to the advantage of both.

5. Use the library books for the reading class. If there is only one copy, let one pupil read several pages while the others listen. Then another pupil reads. Discussions can take place as needed. There is no better way of conducting reading lessons. It is not true that no reading class can be properly conducted unless each pupil has a book in his hand.

6. The teacher herself should read good literature to the whole school. A teacher of third grade pupils whose ages averaged eight years, devoted the last fifteen minutes each school day to reading Wallace's "Ben-Hur" to them. Of course she could not read this book as printed, because the vocabulary is too difficult for pupils of that grade; but she told the story in her own words with the book open before her and she made judicious omissions. The pupils were aflame with interest in the story. The discussions that arose as to points in the story would

have done credit to pupils many years older, and a profound impression for good was made on the class.

If the teacher will read "Little Women" to her pupils, she will have no trouble inducing many to read "Little Men," "Old-fashioned Girl," and other books by Miss Alcott.

By reading to older pupils portions of great poems, or great essays, or great orations, they may be led to further reading by themselves.

It is plain, of course, that this reading by the teacher must be well done. If she reads in an unimpressive manner she kills interest. It were better she should not read at all than that she should disgust pupils with literature. She must give careful forethought and preparation to the selection to be read, and must put her soul into the reading. By so doing she will not only create an interest in good books, but will reach the children by giving them the ideals that are found in literature.

The reading of library books by children has a certain value that is often not appreciated or even considered, and yet which is of prime importance. The child who is interested in reading books will stay at home in the evening and not waste his time running about on the streets with the inevitable undesirable companionship. This is a point lost sight of by those who advocate no home study for pupils. They seem to assume that all children have good homes in which all kinds of proper influences are placed around them. It may well be that no home study is the proper plan in such cases. But consider how many children do not have homes of that character — that the only books

in the home adapted to the child are those he brings from school — that there are no other influences that keep him indoors. Hence, out he goes on the street. The roistering life rapidly develops a distaste for the quiet necessary for reading. The child soon craves nothing but action and movement, and has no patience for thinking. He therefore misses the great things of literature, and gets in their place the doubtful learning of the streets.

The mind is always occupied by something. It is never wholly idle, even during sleep. Shakespeare has truly, even scientifically, said, "The mind grows by what it feeds on." We are familiar with the fact that the body is made up of the substances we eat and drink. The same is true of the mind. If it dwells on border ruffian life, there is great danger that the boy will become a bully. If it feeds on sensational city life, the boy is in a fair way to seek entrance into that life by proper means or improper. The girl who nourishes herself on the stories told of the gay life on Broadway will be a fit subject for sensational acts in her own circle of society, and may even give up her home for the allurements of the city.

It is therefore plain that the child can be brought up to be a fine character if his thinking can be properly directed; and since reading is so large a part of the child's thinking, the importance of supplying good books and arousing an interest in them is evident. When the home does nothing in this matter, the teacher must fill the need, or it will never be filled.

It has been well said that there is a tide in the

affairs of *boys and girls* which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. That tide is very apt to come to them at the age of twelve to fourteen. It is then that character begins to take on permanence. It is then that the imagination is especially active. If at this time the teacher gets the child to read the right book she may give direction to his whole life. One book may mean fortune, or it may mean shallows and miseries. It may mean the development of a man or woman of great usefulness in the world, or it may mean one who will contribute to the sum of its wickedness. From this aspect the neglect of the proper use of the library may have most serious consequences, while its proper use may be a service to humanity larger than any other the teacher may be able to render.

## CHAPTER V

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH THE PLAYGROUND*

Better a playground without a school, than a school without a playground. — LUTHER H. GULICK.

The foregoing quotation by Dr. Gulick was made with particular regard to the value of the playground to pupils physically and socially. It is, however, also of large importance in "getting hold" of some pupils whom the teacher cannot reach in the course of school work. It affords a fine opportunity, in addition to the physical benefits, for the study of the pupil by the teacher, and for the formation of a friendship, or a common interest, that may be indefinitely enlarged.

It is an unfortunate fact that many teachers do not play with their pupils. They occupy their recesses by preparing work for the coming recitations, or they sit at their desks and read. Some go so far as to stand at the window and keep their eyes on the pupils while they play. All these methods are objectionable. The teacher needs exercise at recess as well as the pupils. Ten minutes of activity in the open air will brighten her spirits, keep her mind fresh and prevent her from getting "cranky." Watching the pupils for disciplinary purposes creates a wrong feeling between teacher and pupils.

But if she joyously enters into the sports of the pupils, teaches them new games, and becomes one with them, she will get closer to their little hearts in a day than she otherwise can in a month.

If any of her pupils have the habit of using rough language on the playground, all the teacher need do is to play with them. Of course there will be no roughness when she is there; and after a few days rough language will fall into disuse. The habit of using proper language will be confirmed; and thus a very great reform can be accomplished without a word being said by any one. How much better this is than to secure the same result through harsh measures, even if this were possible!

A young man once took a position as principal, in a school of four teachers. Some of the largest pupils were more powerful physically than he was. But he had no trouble with them, largely because he played baseball with them at recess times. One morning there was some commotion among the pupils before school opened. On inquiry the principal learned that a new pupil was coming to school that morning, a large boy, the son of a saloon-keeper. This boy had a bad record, having been sent out of school the year before. The principal was apprehensive that trouble might arise; but at recess time, when he started the game with the boys, he learned that the newcomer was a "baseball fiend." The principal was pitching when the new boy came to bat. The boy evidently expected to have no trouble in hitting at least two bases, and rather laughed at the idea of a teacher playing baseball. But the principal was on his met-

tle, and the boy, to his surprise, struck out. That was the beginning of a wholesome respect on the part of the pupil for his principal. They talked baseball together, formed a comradeship on the playground, and had no trouble whatever during the school year. A similar influence, though not so marked, was exerted on the other boys. It is safe to say that that principal's ability and willingness to enter into the sports of the pupils was a greater asset in disciplining his school than all other qualities combined.

In our rural schools especially, children know but very few games to play. They do not have half as much fun as they might if they were taught how to play many more games. It is very important that children should play. Up to the age of six the whole business of the child is to play; and throughout his school career it should be a prominent part of the school course. The teacher should therefore not confine her thought and activity to the work side alone, but should also teach the child out of doors in his pleasures.

It is a well known fact that a child's real character does not reveal itself when he is hemmed in by rules and authority; but he shows his true make-up when he is free to do as he pleases. Therefore the playground is a great revealer of character, because on the playground much of the restriction of the school-room is removed.

A visitor to a school once saw a fine dismissal of pupils. They were on the second floor; and as the line was passing out he noticed a boy, larger than others, standing at the stairway and controlling the



whole line, taking special pains to see that the little children were properly protected. On mentioning this fact to the teacher (who, by the way, was not in the hallway), the teacher smiled, and said: "The first day I opened school this same boy planted himself at the foot of the steps, and tripped every little child he could. However, I said nothing about it, but studied the boy. I noticed that on the playground he was a leader; and I determined to take full advantage of his leadership.

"At the end of the first week of school I had a talk with him. I told him that I was concerned about the safety of the children as they passed down the stairs—that he was the largest boy in school, and that I should like to have him help me out by assuming entire charge of the dismissal. He agreed. We discussed the best plan for regulating the dismissal, and the following Monday he took charge. No one could possibly be more careful of the proper discharge of his duties than he is. Instead of being a source of trouble, he is now my right hand man."

Not only is the teacher's influence strong to banish rough language from the playground, but in a positive way pupils may be taught many valuable lessons through the example and precept of the teacher. For instance, there is a disposition on the part of some pupils to claim they were "safe" when they know they were "out," and by vociferating and bullying they sometimes maintain their claim. By and by the general idea spreads that any claim is proper if it can be successfully asserted. This is the very abdication of honesty. It is training in dishonesty. From the

playground these pupils go into life with the spirit of getting the better of others if they can regardless of right and wrong. Thus a most mischievous idea is developed.

If, however, the teacher is "out," he at once yields the point. Even if the umpire calls him "safe," he would do well to say, "No, I was out," unless the decision was very close. Then he may take occasion during school hours to discuss the moral point involved, and show pupils how dishonesty in play is just as reprehensible as dishonesty off the playground.

He can also very effectively teach generosity and politeness. If there is a question as to which of two games is to be played, the teacher should yield his preference. If a disagreement arises as to which of two sides is right in a contention, unless some principle is involved, the teacher shows that the gentlemanly way is to give the privilege to the other side. Scrupulous fairness to an opponent is a most valuable mental habit; and nowhere can this be better emphasized than in the situations that arise in all contests. Thus may selfishness be dealt a strong blow; and thus may the altruistic virtues be trained and strengthened, to the end that the finer traits of character may be developed, and the child be fitted to be a worthy member of society.

If you want to win the heart of a boy, join him in his play.

The old idea of a school was monarchical. The teacher was the autocrat and the pupils were the subjects. It was beneath his dignity to mingle on even

terms with adults, to say nothing of children. Obedience, prompt and unquestioned, was his demand. Pupils were not supposed to think — he did all the thinking for them.

The modern idea of a school is that of the kindergarten — a democracy. In a true kindergarten the teachers play with the children, sit on the same seats, and are simply leaders and directors. That idea should pervade the entire system. Children however young have individualities that should be recognized and respected. Hence, under the democratic idea, the teacher will mingle on even terms with pupils and parents, showing no more dignity than any other person should properly show under the same circumstances. Thus he will reach the pupils through the strong force of mutual regard and good will.

## CHAPTER VI

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH INDUSTRIAL TRAINING*

All work, even cotton-spinning, is noble; work is alone noble.  
—CARLYLE.

THE demand of today is that the course of study and the instruction in our schools shall be related to the needs of everyday life. There was a time when the course of study was purely literary. It was thought that industrial subjects are useless for purposes of mental training. This was in accordance with the teachings of the old psychology.

It is held by some educators that, as far as training the mind is concerned, the study of agriculture is as valuable as the study of Greek, and is of much more usefulness in practical life. Hence the very rapid movement of late years toward a decrease in the number of literary subjects and an increase in the number of industrial subjects.

However, entirely apart from the practical bearing of industrial subjects, they have a value in reaching certain children that cannot be overestimated.

Dr. Bryan, in his fascinating book, "The Basis of Practical Teaching," devotes one chapter to "The Stimulus of Success," in which he shows that in order to secure a basis for advancement in a child's progress

it is necessary to find something that he can do well. From that as a point of departure he will be stimulated to doing other things well. It is immaterial what this acquirement may be — whether skill in a certain study, or in a certain game — the essential point is that the pupil must excel in *something*; and without such excellence but little can be done for the pupil.

Dr. Bryan shows that if two problems are assigned to a class, one easy and one difficult, the chances of getting both problems right are much greater if the easy one is first attempted. In the one case, success in the easy instills confidence for the difficult; in the other, failure in the difficult unfits the student for success with the easy.

In the freshman class of a prominent high school near New York was a boy whose work in Latin was exceedingly poor. He happened, however, to be the only freshman on the high school baseball team; and in an important contest in which his team lost by a score of two to one, he was responsible for the one run, having made a three base hit and scored on an error. He was the hero of that game.

His Latin teacher said to him on Monday morning, "James, I understand you covered yourself with glory in the game last Saturday. That is fine; but really a person should not be a star in only one line. Why don't you make a star of yourself in this Latin class too?" The idea appealed to the boy, and for the rest of the year his work in Latin showed remarkable improvement.

There are some excellent pupils who are not book-

mind, but hand-minded. They fail in the literary side of their school life. They cannot read well, nor write well, nor do any other of the regular studies well. They have fallen (or come) into the habit of failure, which is exactly the opposite of the habit of success, and leads in the opposite direction. Such pupils are apt to be several years older than the others in the class, and are regarded as backward pupils; and what is much more unfortunate, they regard themselves as backward pupils.

Now these pupils may potentially have the elements of good citizenship to a higher degree than others whose standing in regular studies is very high, but they have not been reached. Books do not make an appeal to them. Give them tools and wood or set them to work on a garden plot, or put them behind a team of horses, and their ability may at once become manifest. Hence the value of manual training in reaching pupils.

An interesting point here is that this is the best way of making these pupils proficient in the regular studies. It has often been noticed that if a pupil who does poor work in his classroom, is given work in manual training, he will show instant improvement in his other studies also. Furthermore, he is very likely to improve in his conduct.

In some schools certain pupils who are in too low a grade to join the manual training classes clamor for the privilege, and why? Because they feel that here is work they *can do*; and as all the rest of their school work consists of what they cannot do, their school life is dreary drudgery from morning to night.

No wonder they drop out. Under such conditions school holds nothing for them. They are wasting their time, and are getting into bad intellectual and moral habits.

Some years ago we prided ourselves on the democracy of our public school system. We felt that birth, nationality, wealth, gave no advantage to one pupil over another, as far as the public schools were concerned. All pupils had an equal chance. We gave the same opportunity to all.

When, however, through the beneficent results of child study we became sensible of what we had always known before, that children differ from one another, we began to realize that what is a good chance for one is not necessarily a good chance for another. In other words, the same opportunity for all does not in the least imply an equal opportunity for all. We gave a fine opportunity for the book-minded child, but none at all for the hand-minded child. We gave many chances to the literary pupil, but none to the industrial pupil. The latter was never reached, because we violated the psychological principle that the child cannot be influenced through what he does not like, or through what does not seem valuable to him.

It follows then that a teacher should find for every pupil something he can do well. If this cannot be found in his regular studies, it must be sought in the special subjects. If it cannot be found there, it must be sought on the playground. If not in any of these places, it may be found in the home or in the store, or on the farm. Something *must* be found that the

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child does well. Nothing can be done for him otherwise. How important, therefore, that the teacher should study her pupils on the playground, and should become familiar with their homes; and how important also that she should fit herself to teach the manual arts, so that no pupil may be lost through her inefficiency.



## CHAPTER VII

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH SELF- GOVERNMENT*

In the supremacy of self-control consists one of the perfections of the ideal man. — HERBERT SPENCER.

I will be lord over myself. — GOETHE.

It has already been stated that the central principle of education is the self-activity of the child. As far as the government of a child is concerned, there is no growth in the power of self-control except in so far as the child controls himself. No self-control has ever been developed by outside control. The latter may produce obedience, which is desirable, but it does not produce self-control.

A child who is not permitted to make any choices for himself, but is directed in all he does by fond parents or teachers, is bound to grow up a weakling. He can grow in the power of self-control only by the choices he makes for himself, and not by choices that are made for him by others. Hence the great mistake made by excessive supervision of children by parents and teachers.

Emerson in his essay on Self-Reliance says, "Self-trust is the essence of heroism." Again he says "Trust thyself! Every heart vibrates to that iron string." If a person cannot accomplish much unless

he has trust in himself, he cannot expect others to accomplish much if he does not trust them. Hence as far as the individual is concerned he must trust himself, and as far as others are concerned he must also trust them.

The main reason why children can be reached through self-government is because this method implies a recognition of the essential manhood or womanhood of each child. The glory of the adult is liberty to do as he pleases. Every time a boy does what he pleases he is assuming the prerogative of a man; and as every boy's constant desire is to become a man, the more he does what he pleases the more he is acting like a man.

Therefore in no other way can the teacher reach the pupils more effectively than by assuming that they are men and women and treating them accordingly. Of course this doctrine must be applied with sense, otherwise it will lead to anarchy. But as a principle it is correct.

Edward Everett Hale says that when he and his brothers were still boys their father treated them as if they were men — took them into his confidence in business affairs, sent them to the bank, gave them important commissions to transact — and as a result they rose to the occasion. Dr. Hale stated in his mature years that this was one of the finest things in his training.

Some teachers years ago conducted their schools on the basis that the teacher is everything and the pupils are nothing. The school was run largely on the basis of the teacher's comfort and convenience. Now we

believe that the interests of pupils are paramount, and the teacher merely a servant — not at all a menial position, for did not Christ say that the greatest should be the servant of the others? In a democracy the child must be trained for self-government; and therefore the important matter in the schoolroom is the *child's* comfort, the *child's* activity, the *child's* welfare, not those of the teacher.

It is a well known fact that a teacher can get little children to do almost anything she pleases by suggestion, and that commands are seldom necessary. Suppose for example that the pupils have the habit of leaving their seats at any time, and the teacher wishes to check this habit. She can say, "I don't want anybody to leave his seat without permission." This may cure the fault. The pupils may obey through fear of the consequences.

Another teacher will discuss the matter with the pupils. She will say, "Pupils, do you think it is best for the class for pupils to leave their seats whenever they please?" The pupils will answer, "No." Then the teacher will say, "Do you think if we were all to try real hard we could stay in our seats until recess time?" The pupils will eagerly respond in the affirmative. Then the teacher will say, "Very well, now we will all try to remember." And there is little doubt that the end will be gained *by the pupils' participation*. This is the vital difference between the two plans suggested. It is the first step in the training of children to become completely self-governing.

To state the principle once more we may say that everything in the school life that requires action on

the part of pupils should be done through the initiative of the pupils or through their willing assent to the suggestion of the teacher.

There are well known high schools and grammar schools in which all government is carried on by pupil control in imitation of a borough or city government. Officers are elected and a constitution adopted under which the whole school is conducted. This gives excellent practice in the duties of citizenship. What concerns us, however, is the fact that by this means pupils feel a sense of dignity and responsibility that makes them thoughtful. They act from worthy motives.

There are other schools in which the spirit of self-government exists without any organization. Each pupil understands that he is expected to do the right thing, and is trusted to do so until he proves himself unworthy.

One such school consisted of about seventy-five high school pupils and fifty seventh and eighth grade pupils. These pupils were told in assembly one morning by their principal that he considered them all old enough to do what is right, and that he would trust them in all respects. He required no written excuses for absence or tardiness. If a pupil needed to leave school before its close he went out just as a grown person would do. If the principal was called out of a classroom he would appoint a pupil to continue the recitation, or the class would select one of their number to teach. If a teacher was absent the principal would appoint a pupil teacher for each class. This was, however, almost entirely confined to the high school classes.

These pupils are now men and women. It could be shown, not only from the observations of the teachers at the time, but by the testimony of these men and women that the classes and the whole school were managed with dignity, and that the appeal to their manhood and womanhood was of lasting value.

In this school the question always was, "How would right minded men and women act?" This was the standard for the acts of the pupils. Of course there were occasional offenses. These pupils were not perfect. Neither are men and women perfect. But if something improper occurred, and the principal said to the assembled students, "I wish the person who did this would come to the office after dismissal," the person invariably came and confessed. In two years only one pupil failed to meet this test. Thus as far as possible these pupils were precipitated into adult life of a high order, they lived and moved in an atmosphere of moral dignity, they gained fine views of life, they had practice in noble living. And many a pupil who could not be reached by threats or punishment was reached, or rather reached himself, by this simple appeal to his better nature.

When a pupil has committed an offense, it is exceedingly important that he should assent to the punishment if there be punishment. If the teacher prescribes a penalty that the pupil considers unjust, it will do little good to the pupil. The resentment aroused in his breast by what he considers unfair treatment drives out the effectiveness of the punishment. His heart will be unchanged.

Hence it is often wise to ask a pupil whether he

considers a given penalty just, or even to let him fix his own penalty.

In a certain school a high school pupil whose conduct was excellent in the main, was constantly in trouble with one of her teachers. There was lack of adjustment between them, which ended one day in the dismissal of the girl from the classroom. When she came to the office, the principal said,

"What can I do for you?"

"Mrs. Blank sent me out of the classroom!"

"What? sent *you* out of the classroom?"

"Yes."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

No reply.

"There is something wrong," continued the principal, "and it should be made right."

"Well, I know what I *ought* to do," said the girl.

"Are you willing to do it?" asked the principal.

No reply.

"If you are willing to go back to the class and do what you think you ought to do to make this matter right, I shall be entirely satisfied, and shall not even ask you what it is."

The student agreed. The principal never learned what she did; but from that day there was no more friction between that pupil and her teacher. It was a case of complete self-government, of self-conquest.

There are teachers who are hasty in demanding apologies from their pupils. This requirement is the source of so much anxiety, perplexity, and hard feeling that a principal would be justified in forbidding any

teacher to require an apology without his consent. Too often the demand for an apology is made when the teacher is annoyed. There is not always a cool, careful investigation of the case before sentence is passed. The pupil is sent out of the room at once—he cannot be readmitted without an apology; and this ultimatum is made before the other pupils.

But the principal finds the pupil unwilling to make an apology because he feels that none is required by the facts—that he was not guilty as charged, or at least that there were mitigating circumstances—others just as guilty as he—that would seem to modify the offense. The principal knows very well that an apology forced under such circumstances is merely a matter of words, and that it does no good. He wants to sustain the teacher, and yet he hesitates to compel an apology especially because he feels that the teacher was hasty. Finally the parents come in and insist that rather than have their child apologize they will take him out of school, or bring the case before the board of education. There is more excitement and disturbance in these apology cases than in many others that might be mentioned.

The teacher should never prescribe penalties at once. She should never at the moment lay down the conditions of readmission to her class. She may indeed dismiss the pupil from the room, but her hands should be free to prescribe what penalty is deemed suitable after an unbiased investigation. Neither has she any right to tie the hands of the principal. If she lays down her conditions in advance, he must either concur in them or overrule them; and in his

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anxiety to avoid the latter alternative he may be unjust to the pupil.

The idea of the self-governed school is that the pupil should never apologize to anybody unless he feels that he ought. Forced apologies are not only ineffective but positively harmful. Men and women never make them; and it is a blow to the dignity of the child to compel him to do that which he resents. Outside control never reached a child unless it led in the end to self-control.



## CHAPTER VIII

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH THE PRIVATE CONVERSATION*

When all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. — BACON.

SOME years ago books on school management classified the several steps to be taken in the treatment of offenders in school. Among the first suggestions was that private reproof should precede public reproof — that a pupil should not be criticised before his school-mates until he had first been criticised privately without avail.

This is good sense, and good psychology. We may go further and say that there are very few cases indeed in which public reproof is justifiable. The school-room is for study, not for lecturing. To upbraid a pupil before the class not only harasses the feelings of all the pupils but it takes the time scheduled for work.

Public reproof seldom reaches anybody except to mortify him. It does not give him higher motives, nor nobler resolves. On the contrary, if a pupil is held up before his classmates as a reprobate, he is very apt to assume and carry out the rôle thus assigned him.

Strictly speaking, private *reproof* is not a very good

term to use. In many cases no reproof at all is necessary. A mere conversation or talk in private may suffice — nay, more often reaches the child than private reproof. It is not true that every dereliction must be punished. It is not true that all pupils sometimes need a scolding. What is true is that pupils who have gone wrong must be led to go right; and this can be done much better by persuasion than by criticism.

A superintendent once asked a teacher in a rural school to call out and teach her lowest class in reading. She summoned the class, and three pupils came forward, two about six years old and one about ten. Before beginning the recitation the teacher said in a loud voice (the superintendent was in the rear of the room), "Mr. Blank, this large pupil is the most stupid boy I have ever seen. I have tried my best, and can't get anything into him." When the superintendent had completed his visit, he spoke to the teacher about the boy. He said, "Don't you think that boy felt hurt to be held up as a dunce before his superintendent in the presence of his classmates?" She said, "Oh, no, that didn't make any difference." "But," said the superintendent, "if at our next county institute I should ask you to stand up before all the assembled teachers, and should state thus publicly that you are the dullest teacher I have ever seen — how would you like that?" "Oh, that's something entirely different," was her reply.

"Not at all," said the superintendent, "that boy has feelings just as you have. To be pronounced a hopeless dunce before his superintendent and his class-

mates was a mortification for which he will never forgive you, and it was an injury from which he may never recover."

Go into many schoolrooms, and you will find too much public criticism, too much fault-finding, too much correction, too much projection of superiority on the part of the teacher. Every school should be a coöperative society — everybody working together for the good of the whole and of each individual — under the guidance of its most mature member, the teacher.

It is not necessary for the teacher to wait until some offence has been committed before she has a private conversation with her pupils. After the first week of school she would do well to select a pupil and make an appointment to have a talk with him alone. In this talk she should strive to gain his friendship — to study his disposition, to learn about his aims in life and his conditions. He will reveal himself to her in private, whereas he would say little or nothing in public. The teacher who asks a pupil questions before his classmates in regard to his personal life shows bad manners herself and violates the sanctity of privacy. Even in the private conversation her inquiries have natural limits. But if she shows good judgment a bond of sympathy will spring up that will go far to prevent the occurrence of any trouble in the future. Moreover, she can give him some bits of advice — not too much, for this conversation should not be a confessional — and can learn wherein he needs help.

When offences arise in the schoolroom, nothing should be said about them if possible; but some time during the day the offender should be asked privately

to remain after school. Then the teacher should take him to a private room, or exclude everybody from her classroom, and in a calm and indeed sympathetic manner should inquire into the circumstances of the offence. The pupil should be given a full opportunity to state his case. The teacher should not "go at him" in a critical spirit, but in the spirit of an inquirer. Then she should show the pupil just why the act was wrong, after which, if he sees it, she can usually count on his amendment without scolding or even without his making a formal promise.

Teachers should remember, and freely admit, first, that we ask too much when we expect pupils to be perfect; and secondly, that we adults are not perfect. The teacher who governs her pupils on the basis of what they *ought to be* is not as wise as she who takes as her basis the pupils *as they are*. Teachers who say, "Pupils ought not to have a false code of honor," should be met by the statement, "You and I should also not have a false code in anything."

In a certain high school the pupils were requested to describe the best teacher they had ever had, and tell why they liked her. When these papers came in, it was interesting to see that in a large majority of instances the statement was made, "I liked her because she was fair." Children have a very keen sense of justice and injustice; and though a strong teacher can stifle the manifestation of their resentment when she is unjust to them, she cannot smother the feeling, and she can never reach them as long as that feeling persists.

In the private conversation the teacher must show

a spirit of absolute fairness toward the pupil. She must therefore be in a proper frame of mind when the interview takes place. If she is to act as judge she must be as impartial and unprejudiced as a judge. Hence an interview regarding an offence should in some cases not be held until a day or more has elapsed — not until the teacher feels that she can administer exact justice. When the pupil can feel in the atmosphere of the room that he will get a “square deal,” conditions are appropriate for a valuable interchange of ideas.

Mr. Edward Howard Griggs, in his book on “Moral Education,” has pointed out that treatment of a pupil for an offence should follow the method of a physician treating a patient. The interview should be private. The teacher should inquire into the history of the pupil to see whether there is anything in his ancestry to account for the trouble. Then she should inquire into the conditions that brought about the offence. Next there should be an examination of the offence itself. Lastly, there should be such treatment as will cure the offence.

Too often teachers make no diagnosis of a case, but prescribe purely on the basis of external symptoms. And too often they use the patent medicine treatment, namely that a certain remedy is always good for all people. Of course we know that rarely does the wise physician prescribe the same remedy for the same disease. It all depends on the condition of the patient.

Just as a physician cannot reach the seat of a disease without a diagnosis, and just as he must give

individual prescriptions for the same disease, so the teacher cannot reach the pupils unless she has adequate knowledge of the pupils' heredity, environment, physical and mental make up, and unless she gives such treatment as will be exactly adapted to the individual under consideration.

When a pupil appears before the teacher to answer for an offence, the teacher should remember the many functions in which she is clothed. Probably she made the laws which have been broken. Now she is not only judge, but also jury, counsel for the prosecution, and executioner. Against this formidable array of functions there is only the ten year old boy. A judge must be absolutely unbiased. He must see that the prisoner gets all his rights — gets a fair trial in all respects. Is the teacher always as unbiased against an offending pupil as is a judge against a man on trial for murder? Having in the nature of things so many rôles, the teacher would do well to assume one more, namely, counsel for the defence! Give the boy a fair chance to say what he can in his favor. If he can bring any witnesses to assist him, by all means let them be summoned. Furthermore, counsel for the defence would bring out in court the extenuating circumstances — a hot temper, poor home surroundings, bad associates, immaturity, the probability of reformation if sentence were suspended. Let these points be brought out by the teacher in the boy's behalf. And just as the prisoner in court is presumed to be innocent until he is proven guilty, so the youthful offender must not be prejudged.

The purpose of this endeavor to be fair is not

only that justice may prevail, but that the pupil shall recognize in the teacher a friend who is fair, and who is willing to give him the benefit of the doubt. Then the teacher can reach the pupil who heretofore may have closed his heart to her.

The desire of the teacher to be fair in these private conversations is often sadly embarrassed by a pupil's previous bad reputation. A principal was in his office one morning when a teacher, looking out of the window, exclaimed, "Here comes Charley Blank! He was expelled from school, then expelled from the navy, and now he is coming back to school!"

The principal had never met this young man, who was then eighteen; but immediately he put him down in his own mind as a pupil who needed watching. To every movement the principal attached significance. Very soon the principal reprimanded him in the presence of the pupils. A few days later the boy went home because a classmate had been sent home. He was called in for a private conversation. The principal began in a severe tone. The boy answered coolly, indeed manfully. He explained that, in the navy, the code of honor demanded that if one were punished the others should "take their medicine" too. In that conversation the principal learned that Charley was not wholly bad — that he had rather low ideals, to be sure; not always a sense of the fitness of things, but that he meant fairly well. The upshot of that conversation was the formation of a better understanding, and indeed of a friendship that led to "smooth sailing" as long as the young man continued in school.

The new teacher should as much as possible close her ears to unfavorable information about any of her pupils. It will inevitably affect her attitude toward a pupil if she has formed a prejudice against him in advance. If a patient goes from one physician to another, the latter always makes his diagnosis for himself, and does not accept that made by the former. Every pupil coming to school should be admitted with a clean slate.

In some graded schools teachers make notes in regard to their children during the year, and send them to the next teacher in the fall. This is an excellent plan provided there are no notes reflecting on the pupils' conduct. Since so much of misconduct is caused by lack of adjustment, it may be that the new teacher, if unhampered, may be able *in her way* to make the adjustment at once. At any rate, the pupil does not get a fair chance with the new teacher if his past offences are spread out before her eyes at the beginning of the term.

It is thus plain that the private conversation, conducted with judicial fairness and with sympathy, is one of the most effective means of reaching the pupils that the teacher can employ. Whatever power there may be of mind over mind is here active. The admitted power of sympathy is here exerted. No better conditions for influencing pupils can be secured than the privacy of this conference; and the effect is most powerful because it flows from heart to heart.



## CHAPTER IX

### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH ENCOURAGEMENT

And many strokes, though with a little ax,  
Hew down and fell the hardest timbered oak.

— SHAKESPEARE.

Imagination rules the world! — NAPOLEON.

I can do whatever I will to do. — "STONEWALL" JACKSON.

THE word *encouragement* literally means "putting heart into." To *encourage* some one is to put heart into him. A person is *discouraged* when his heart is out of him. We say of an ambitious, rising young man, "His heart is in his work"; while we say of a person who is failing, "His heart is not in his work."

Just as no adult succeeds whose heart is not in his work, so no pupil succeeds if his heart is not in his work. A child does not win at play if his heart is not in it. A baseball team is beaten before the game starts if the players are disheartened. There is not a walk in life above pure drudgery in which success is not conditioned on the amount of "heart" that is put into one's work. A high order of intellect without "heart" cannot equal the accomplishment of a lower order of intellect plus "heart."

If a pupil moves along in his studies in a careless or perfunctory manner, and the teacher succeeds by

some means in putting "heart" into him, it transforms his life. He becomes energetic, alert, eager, ambitious. His class standing rises rapidly. His deportment will be entirely satisfactory. In other words, if the teacher has reached the pupil, she has performed for him the greatest service that one person can render to another.

Some years ago a boy in a certain high school was a year behind his class. His record up to the end of the second year was one of great carelessness in work and in conduct. The principal felt, however, that this boy was naturally bright. He had several private interviews with him. One day he said, "Charles, you are bright enough to go to college. You have no means of your own, and there are no means in your family; but I know a man who sings in the same choir with you, who has means, and would very likely be willing to send you through college if I could go to him and vouch for your excellence as a student and your worth as a young man. But I suppose you realize that at present I cannot do this."

"I know you can't," said the boy.

"But I should like to do so," said the principal.

This was in June. Nothing more was said until the fall. Then the head teacher in the high school came to the principal one day in great amusement, and said, "What do you think — Charles says he is going to do two years' work in one, and graduate next June!"

"Well," said the principal, "Let him run his head against the proposition and see what comes of it."

Charles took five studies in class, and was given permission to pursue three at his home and take

monthly tests therein. This was a heavy program; but what was the surprise of the teachers when month after month this boy stood very high not only in his class work but in his monthly tests in all subjects; and to cap the climax he took two studies beyond the requirement, and passed in them also. In one year this boy, who had formerly been so indifferent, passed with credit in ten subjects whereas the regular number for one year was only four. And as a by-product his conduct, which had formerly been very unsatisfactory, was now equal to the best in the class.

It remains to be said that the boy was sent to college by the method first suggested by the principal; and while the death of his benefactor cut his course short before graduation, yet that young man has made a success in engineering work, and is a good citizen.

Teachers know what a good effect on them a kind word from their superintendent or principal produces. If he visits their rooms several times a week for a year and never expresses satisfaction with what he sees, the teacher is in a state of uncertainty and perplexity. She does not feel comfortable. She cannot pursue her work with assurance. Altogether she is not in a proper frame of mind to do her best work.

The same is true of a pupil. He, as well as the teacher, is hungry for the kind word. The "well done" of the teacher is just as important to him as is the "well done" of the superintendent to the teacher. It puts "heart" into him. He feels that the teacher appreciates his efforts and his success, all of which will stimulate him to greater exertion.

It is a curious fact that in many schools the pupils

who least need encouragement get the most, while those who need it most get the least. A child whose work is well-nigh perfect already has her heart in it. She is already full of zeal. But the poor little fellow who is at the foot of the class seldom gets the encouraging word though he is in desperate need of it, and his salvation may depend upon it.

The reader will at once think, "How is it possible to encourage a boy when there is no work that is worthy of commendation?" There are several ways of approaching the matter. In the first place, he may be trying in some subject. If so, his effort is worthy of praise. He may even show flashes of good work which may be properly appreciated. He may excel in manual training or in baseball. Whatever it is, the teacher should take occasion to mention it before the school.

In the second place, the pupil may have received a mark of twenty in arithmetic last week, and forty this week. Here is an improvement of one hundred per cent—a remarkable step in advance. This is certainly worthy of commendation. It is an occasion for killing the fatted calf.

In the third place, the teacher may put "heart" into this pupil by telling him of other persons who stood very low in their classes at school, yet who afterwards became famous, such as Isaac Newton, Walter Scott, and others. And the teacher may say, "You can do precisely as much as they did as students. You can do the best you can. No man living or dead ever did more. Put forth your best efforts, and you will win at last." By these three means

and others like them there is an ample field for the encouragement of dull pupils.

When Benjamin West, the great painter, was a little boy, his mother placed in his care his baby brother while she left the house on a matter of business. When she returned an hour later she found that Benjamin had amused himself in the interim by drawing on paper a picture of the baby as it lay in the cradle. The mother was delighted, and so expressed herself. In after years he said, "My mother's kiss made me a painter."

All experience says to superintendents in their relations with teachers, "Find something to praise!" All experience says to teachers in their relations with pupils, "Find something to praise!" Many a teacher who has great difficulty with her classes has been saved by a superintendent who has said, "I have absolute confidence that you have it in you to succeed. You are weak in these several respects, but who is not weak in some respects? Now pluck up your courage and go at things with confidence. You may not succeed at once, but if you only get a start now and improve on it you will be going in the right direction." And if this teacher does give signs of improvement, and the superintendent speaks of them and says, "That's the way!" she will go forward on the wings of his encouragement.

Even more can be done in this way with a dull pupil than with a teacher. He will do nothing unless he has the confidence of somebody. Criticism will only confirm his habit of failure. Demotion or punishment will not lift him up. Driving seldom is of any value.

There must be some force that pulls him upward, and that force is encouragement.

A business man prominent in three states said not long ago: "While I live, I shall never forget the debt I owe to Mr. ———, an obscure country teacher. As a child I stammered. When I entered school, the pupils made fun of me. When I rose to read, I became so self-conscious that I could not read at all. After some years of misery, with no improvement, Mr. ——— came to be our teacher. The first time I tried to read for him I began to stammer badly; but in a kindly voice he told me to wait a moment, see clearly what I wanted to read, and not to hurry. With these directions there was at once a great improvement. He kept me after school by myself and gave me practice in reading. Later he encouraged me to take the examinations for a teacher's certificate. I passed, and began to teach. I feel that my whole life was more benefited by the encouragement of that humble teacher than by all other influences combined."

It is in this phase of character development that the school library is of great importance. Nothing helps a young person who has a hard struggle as much as reading or learning of others who had the same adversities. Their success gives him the encouragement he needs for his own success. The teacher can also assist in this matter by the helpful word, the sympathetic manner, and especially by the attitude that shows the pupil that *she understands*.

In a certain school a ten year old boy came from a home in which he heard much profanity. He was so

accustomed to it that he used it himself without thinking. One day at school while at play the teacher overheard him using a profane word. He corrected him sternly, saying that another like offence would lead to severe punishment. Some two weeks later the same offence did occur, and the boy was whipped.

On analysis it would seem as if this teacher not only did the pupil a great injustice, but used exactly the wrong method to reach the boy. If on the first occasion he had said, "My dear boy, I heard you swearing just now, perhaps unconsciously. I know how much swearing you hear at your home, and I have been surprised that you are doing so well. This is the first time I have heard you swear in these two weeks. Now let us see whether you can do as well the next week." And if the offence was repeated in two weeks, the teacher might well have said, "You are doing nobly! Once in two weeks is very much less than I could have done under the same circumstances. Of course, swearing is wrong, especially at school; but if you keep on you will overcome the habit entirely!" By means of appreciation for what pupils do *not* do, as well as for what they do, we can often produce results in character building that the most severe punishments fail to secure.

Another means of encouraging pupils in their school progress is by a preservation of the pupil's work from time to time, and its comparison with that which is done later. For instance, at the opening of school the teacher asks all pupils to write in their best hand a stanza of poetry. Near the end of the term she gives the same exercise. Then she compares the first ex-

ercise with the second. The improvement in most cases is much greater than the teacher herself realizes. This encourages the teacher as well as the pupils. Of course the same comparisons can be made in all written work.

A very powerful assistant in imbuing children with encouragement is to remove the causes of discouragement. If non-promotion has taken the heart out of a pupil, promote him on trial. He will surely do no worse after the advance than before, and he may do much better. At any rate he is likely to get more good out of the advanced class than out of the regular grade. Promotions must never fail to take into account psychological effects.

In some high schools a pupil begins a certain study and finds he does not like it and cannot do it. If he needs that study in his future course, he must naturally make the best of it; but if he does not need it, the question arises whether he should be allowed to drop it. Some teachers will not permit the dropping of any subject or a change of course after say two months of the term have expired. There are pupils whose marks in such study have shown a failure for ten months in succession. This is surely training in failure. The pupil has gained nothing; but in addition to the habit of failure he has lived in an atmosphere of discouragement for a year — enough to break the spirit of anybody. Psychology says, "Give the student what he can do, and if he undertakes something and after thorough trial finds he cannot do it, give him something else that he can master." We grow by success, and not by failure. No man can



put his heart into any work that is forever beyond his strength.

Other sources of discouragement are mentioned elsewhere. Unfavorable criticism takes the heart out of pupils. The offering of rewards takes the heart out of pupils who do not get them. Comparing a pupil from a poor and ignorant home with another from a fine home discourages the former. The teacher should never compare one pupil with another. The only proper comparison is of one pupil with himself.

Excessively long or difficult lessons are a source of discouragement. Not long ago a man who is an expert accountant in the New York office of the Standard Oil Company sat down one evening at eight o'clock to help his twelve year old daughter work her arithmetic problems. After an hour he sent her to bed; and it was not until after midnight that he finished the task himself. Surely this teacher did not realize how much he was requiring of his pupils.

The constant study of the teacher should therefore be, "How can I take away all elements that tend to discourage my pupils? — What elements can I bring to bear that will encourage my pupils?" By this positive and negative study she cannot only secure enthusiasm in school lessons, but can exert a strong uplift on the lives of the children.

## CHAPTER X

### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH TALKS BY THE TEACHER

Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world, alters the world. — EMERSON — *Politics*.

A thought often makes us hotter than a fire. — LONGFELLOW — *Table-Talk*.

They are never alone who are accompanied with noble thoughts. — SIDNEY — *Arcadia*.

Nurture your mind with great thoughts. — DISRAELI.

Thought once awakened does not again slumber. — CARLYLE.

IN some schools it is the custom for the principal to address the pupils in assembly from fifteen to twenty minutes every week. There is much testimony to show that this weekly exercise may be of great value in reaching the pupils.

A prominent man once said that during his school days the principal gave weekly talks on a variety of subjects, and that he derived more benefit from them than from his school studies.

A mother who had a boy at high school was somewhat perplexed because he did not seem to show any earnestness of purpose. He was not a bad boy, but he did not seem to take life at all seriously, and did not show any ambition as to his future. But one day

the mother said to a neighbor, "There has been a very remarkable change in John's attitude toward life since last month. Something that his school principal said in his weekly talk struck the right spot in him, and he is now all I could desire. He is full of ambition, and I feel that we have no more to worry about." That young man not only made a creditable record at high school, but graduated with honor from Pratt Institute, and is a fine man in every respect. Surely if all the morning talks of that whole year had resulted in nothing more than in reaching this young man, they would have been amply justified.

Especially in high schools it seems important that the principal should set forth before the pupils his ideals of life. He is presumed to have high aims, and be old enough to have had experience and observation. The pupils have vague ideals, or improper ideals, and they need not only to have right ideals set before them, but they must be inspired to pursue them.

This work should, however, not be confined to high schools. In some respects these talks are more needed in rural schools than in high schools. The latter are usually situated in towns, in which are found many kinds of institutions for social and personal uplift; while the rural schools are often remote from all such institutions. Pupils who attend these schools seldom hear an inspiring talk unless it is given to them by their teacher. In many cases they will get no high ideals of life if the teacher does not set them forth. It is a great thing for a pupil to be brought face to face with the meaning of life, so that he may go on his way with a purpose, and not wander aim-

lessly along. There is no agency better calculated to accomplish this result than the weekly talk.

The teacher who undertakes to give these talks should herself be inspired with a high moral purpose. She must be thoroughly in earnest. Her presentation of moral subjects must be the natural outflow of her own life. If the pupils get a suspicion that the teacher is not herself trying to live up to the ideals she sets forth she will do more harm than good by her talks, because she will in their eyes be a hypocrite; and from this example pupils will gradually get the idea that all seemingly good people are hypocrites.

These talks should be thoroughly prepared by the teacher. She should choose her subject with care, then plan the talk so as to make it interesting and pertinent to the pupils, and if necessary write out some of the sentences so as to make them as strong as possible. Of course she must use no manuscript in giving the talk, nor must she use any of the ridiculous gesticulations and expressions that at one time masqueraded under the name of elocution. She must be as simple and natural as possible — there must be no assuming of airs, nor must there be any formality in the occasion.

White's "School Management" contains a very full list of subjects for these talks, with stories, poems, and illustrations to make them effective. This book contains enough material for a year. It also gives suggestions for its use. Another helpful book is Shearer's "Morals and Manners."

This may be a good place to call attention to the fact that, in this work, the teacher should endeavor

to give inspiration to girls as well as to boys. It is a curious fact that nearly everybody who addresses pupils confines himself to boys. He tells of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington — of Gladstone, Cromwell, Andrew Jackson — of boys he knew who worked their way amid great difficulties; but did you ever hear a speaker tell of *girls* who likewise worked their way? And he will urge all the pupils, boys and girls, to take Lincoln as an example! Is this because girls have never risen amid difficulties, because they are not supposed to rise under any circumstances, or because they do not need any inspiration? Surely this cannot be the reason. It is, rather, because we have become accustomed to the presentation of the male ideal.

Every time, therefore, that the teacher talks to pupils about some fine man and holds him up as an example, she should on the next occasion set forth the life of a fine woman as an example. You do not want your girl to grow up to be an ideal man any more than you want your boy to become an ideal woman.

The teacher will do well to illustrate her talks as much as possible by stories of living persons known to pupils either personally or by reputation. It is a question whether a story of Socrates will take hold of a pupil as effectively as a story of some humbler man or woman living a life of usefulness today. In the state or county on which the pupil lives there are fine people of whom he has heard, and who are therefore more within his ken than the ancient Greeks; and he will be much more likely to find inspiration in them than in persons living far away or in ancient times.

For example: One of the leading trained nurses in a certain city was once a girl in a remote rural section of the state. On account of the death of her mother she had to leave school at the age of fifteen to assume charge of a large family. Her father did not believe in the education of girls, so he designed her for his housekeeper. One by one he educated his boys, but her turn never came to go away to school. But she too was ambitious; and when she became twenty-one, knowing that her father had means to secure a housekeeper, she determined to strike out for herself. She entered a hospital to study nursing, supported herself, graduated from a four-year course, and soon became one of the very efficient nurses of a large city.

This is a story which, if told to pupils who live in the state in which this incident occurred, will prove of great interest and benefit to them. This is not a story of some extraordinary genius who was led by heavenly voices, but a plain country girl who had ambition and initiative. Up to the age of twenty-one she lived the same life that all rural girls live. Hence her story will appeal to girls because she was one of them.

In the same county a boy attended a rural school until he was seventeen. Then one morning he walked to a graded school three miles away and asked to be admitted. He was placed in an eighth grade among pupils three years younger than he was. Owing to his neglected early education he had a hard struggle to keep up with even the poorest pupils in the grade; but he was thoroughly in earnest, and through the sympathetic help of his teachers he was able to pass to

the high school the next fall, whence he graduated at the age of twenty-two. During his high school course he was compelled to take charge of his home farm, because his father was not strong enough to do it; and as the family means were very small, the boy had to earn his tuition as he went along. He devised all sorts of ways to do this. For instance, he made over one hundred dollars each year through his bee hives.

Having graduated at high school, this young man determined to gain a college education. This was a formidable proposition under the circumstances, and he had to stay at home one year because he had no money; but then he entered college, and by means of unremitting industry he made his way through year by year, graduating at the age of twenty-seven.

His sterling qualities did not fail to commend themselves to the professors of the college; and on graduation he at once received an appointment as assistant professor of agriculture in a western university.

These two stories, one of a girl, the other of a boy, illustrate the type that appeals to pupils everywhere, but especially to those who live in the same county with them. All children come to the point some time in their lives when they have a feeling that all great personal achievements belong to the past; that the days of knighthood perished with the middle ages; that there is no opportunity for heroism except in time of war. It is for the teacher to point out by such stories as above given that the finest kind of heroism is going on all around us at the present day, and that there is an unlimited field for personal achievement open to every boy and girl.

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Some teachers object to the suggestions in this chapter on the ground that moralizing is repugnant to pupils, and does more harm than good. It has already been pointed out that no teacher should undertake these talks unless she can substantiate them in her own life. It may also be stated in passing that if a teacher cannot "back up" talks of this nature she is not qualified to be a teacher. But all experience proves that pupils listen eagerly to these stories and talks if they are well presented. There is a spirit within each pupil that responds to the appeal to higher things. Naturally the teacher must use judgment in this, as in all other matters; but in the hands of the good teacher this direct appeal to the ambition of the pupils is one of the most powerful influences for good yet discovered.



## CHAPTER XI

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH FINE SENTIMENTS*

Who can estimate the value of a good thought? — **EMERSON.**

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,  
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,  
Our hearts, in glad surprise,  
To higher levels rise.

— **LONGFELLOW.**

OCCASIONALLY some great writer crystallizes in a few words a portion of the meaning of life. He puts into a single statement the result of years of thinking of a fine mind. He embodies in a few words a thought of which we have, perhaps, been vaguely conscious ourselves, but which we have been unable to formulate. When we happen on such sentiments,

“Our hearts, in glad surprise,  
To higher levels rise.”

These sentiments, if cherished, become more and more principles of conduct. As such they have a powerful influence on our lives. They are anchors that hold us in time of storm and keep us from being blown out to sea or dashed upon the rocks. They are the rules that determine the “structure that we raise.” They are the guide posts that point the way along the journey of life.

In youth, filled with the freshness of early life, these teachings are especially effective. Children are just setting out on their journey, and they eagerly seize upon directions that may keep them from losing their way. They are full of hope and confidence; and the seed of inspiring thoughts finds fertile soil.

Hence there should be systematic use of fine mottoes and sentiments in the schoolroom. One each week may very well be placed on the blackboard, explained, illustrated, applied, and memorized. At the end of his school course the child will thus have filled his mind with an invaluable collection of fine gems that will enrich his life for all time.

An extract that is strong, and at the same time simple, is this from Charles Dickens: "Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest."

In order that this extract may become effective the teacher must explain to the pupils something of the work that Dickens accomplished in the way of social reform — schools, teaching, almshouses, jails, courts, society. She must bring out the quality of output of his whole life, and show how this would have been impossible but for his adherence to his motto of always being "thoroughly in earnest." The next step is to show how other men and women who accomplish things worth while in all walks of life are consciously or unconsciously realizing the teachings of Dickens, and how this is true in school work. Then she should show the disastrous consequences of the violation of

Dickens's rule — how certain persons naturally bright have frittered away their lives from pure lack of earnestness. In this way the extract will become full of meaning to the children. It should be repeated many times — kept under constant review. With each repetition it will sink deeper, and tend to become a more powerful influence.

Another extract that has a deep meaning is from Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

“One ship drives east, the other drives west,  
With the self same winds that blow;  
’Tis the set of the sails, and not the gales,  
That determines which way they go.

“Like the winds of the sea are the winds of fate,  
As we voyage along through life;  
’Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal,  
And not the calm or the strife.”

In teaching this extract there must be some instruction in the method of handling a sail boat. Pupils must be shown how it is possible to sail against the wind, and the importance of “tacking.” It is an easy step to lead them to see how you cannot tell in which way a ship is going from the direction of the wind. Then pupils may be shown how some people always go with the wind, even if it is in the wrong direction; and how some people have a hard fight because the wind is against them; and how in nearly all cases the wind changes by and by. After these and other explanations that will occur to the teacher, the pupils are ready for the expression of the thought as given by Mrs. Wilcox.

Boys are usually much interested in the romantic exploits of "Stonewall" Jackson. The teacher might very well point him out as an example of one who was "thoroughly in earnest."

The story of his early life in what is now West Virginia shows a boy with few chances for advancement. Then comes his entry into West Point, his brave struggle to overcome his early deficiencies of education; how all he could possibly do the first year was to keep himself from being dropped from his class for inability to do the work, but how he finally graduated tenth in a class of twenty-seven; and how through the severe pressure of these four years he was sustained by the motto that he adopted early in life, "*I can do whatever I will to do.*" The teacher should show how after West Point, in the Mexican and the Civil wars, his marvelous achievements sprang out of the effective use of his own motto. Of course, the teacher must always supply additional examples to show how a motto is universally true.

Some young people, and many adults, are obsessed with the conviction that success or failure in life depends on external conditions, facts, or circumstances. They think people succeed because they are lucky, or fail because they are unlucky. They feel that progress is only for persons of means, and not for people who are poor. A fine antidote for this state of mind is the expression of Walt Whitman: "Henceforth I ask not good fortune — I myself *am* good fortune." It is needless to suggest the numberless instances on every hand that prove the correctness of this thought;

and the teacher will do a great work if by driving it into the minds of the pupils she thereby expels that vicious notion of luck that has wrought so much damage in the lives of people of all ages.

Philip James Bailey, in *Festus*, gives us these familiar lines:

“ We live  
In deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths,  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.  
We should count time by heart throbs — he most lives  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.”

Shakespeare has many good things to contribute to this work:

“Our doubts are traitors,  
And make us lose the good we oft might win  
By fearing to attempt.”

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves that we are underlings.”

In the old-time schools it was customary to place on the wall printed mottoes. Some of these did more good than we realized at the time. They are just as valuable today as at any time, and should be presented to the pupils even if they seem trite to us. For instance, one of the old mottoes taught a lesson we should all heed:

“Wealth lost, nothing lost;  
Health lost, much lost;  
Character lost, all lost!”

Other mottoes are, “A stitch in time saves nine.”  
“Many a mickle makes a muckle.” “Night brings

out the stars." "Labor conquers all things." "Do the next thing."

The field of mottoes and extracts is rich. All depends on the teacher whether these riches shall be made available for the pupils, and be to them a great blessing.

## CHAPTER XII

### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH SYMPATHY

The secrets of life are not shown except to sympathy and likeness. — EMERSON'S *Representative Men*.

The man who melts  
With social sympathy, though not allied,  
Is than a thousand kinsmen of more worth.

— EURIPIDES — *Orestes*.

Ah! thank Heaven, travellers find Samaritans as well as Levites on life's hard way. — THACKERAY.

Sympathy is the golden key that unlocks the hearts of others.  
— SMILES.

Next to love, sympathy is the divinest passion of the human heart. — BURKE.

It is a well known fact that our greatest influence is exerted on those who are most closely connected with us. We have but little influence on mere acquaintances, and none at all on persons we do not know.

Thus the teacher influences most the pupils whom she knows best. A good teacher will strive to become intimate with all her pupils, and in that way her possibilities for good will be at their maximum.

But mere knowledge does not tell the whole story. Nobody is influenced by another except through the feelings. It is the feelings that move the will. In-

telleet is cold. The will is not moved by mere intellect.

The word *sympathy*, when analyzed, means "a feeling *with*" some one or some thing. When we do not like a certain proposition in civic or social life, we say we are not *in sympathy* with it, or we sometimes find ourselves *out of sympathy* with a man.

Now nothing is more certain than that we cannot do anything to help another if we are out of sympathy with him. Only sympathizers can help. Others, in the nature of the case, antagonize. "He that is not for us is against us."

The absolutely essential attitude for the teacher to take if she would reach her pupils is one of sympathy. Without it she can do nothing in the way of influencing them.

The teacher cannot do much to help pupils unless she has *feeling with* their sorrows, joys, troubles, perplexities. She cannot reach them unless she enters into their interests, into their lives. To remain out of touch with these lives, and simply to reason with them, will not move them. No connection is established.


It sometimes happens that a boy is sent to a man principal because of truancy. It may also be that when that principal was a boy he himself was guilty of the same offence. In that case, nothing will bring the principal nearer to that boy's heart than for him to say, "My dear boy, I know exactly why you did this, and how you feel about it, because when I was a boy I did the same thing. I don't pretend that I was a perfect boy any more than I am now a perfect



man. However, that doesn't alter the fact that truancy is wrong; and just as I overcame it, I want you to overcome it." This clears the way for a frank interchange of views. It places the teacher on the same level with the pupil, and puts him in a position to help him. He cannot reach down from a moral mountain top to take the hand of those at the foot.

The sympathetic attitude of the teacher may be considered in reference to the school as a whole, and also in reference to individual pupils. The first morning a teacher appears before her class the pupils will discern her attitude toward them. She cannot deceive them even if she would. They will instinctively feel whether she likes teaching or not, whether she is fond of children or not, whether she will treat them as a kind helper or hold herself aloof. They make this analysis almost unconsciously. They tell from the tone of her voice, her manner, the flash of the eye, and the many little acts that are part of the daily life in the schoolroom. On that impression of the first morning depends a great deal of the teacher's success during the year. If the children's verdict is not favorable, they will instinctively take a negative attitude toward her. Like sensitive plants they will close themselves to her approach.

If on the other hand the teacher shows the right attitude toward the school, the pupils "in glad surprise" open their hearts to her. They are ready to do anything for her. They feel that what she does is actuated by a desire for their good. They fear to lose her favor, or to grieve her by misconduct. They



love the school work because of her attitude toward it and toward them. Teacher and pupils work in complete harmony. They form a coöperative society with the teacher as leader. This means good school work, good moral training, good preparation for citizenship, teaching and learning a pleasure. In no way can the teacher make her work more effective and pleasant than by possessing and showing the right attitude toward the school as a whole.

In addition to this general attitude there must be an individual relation between the teacher and each of her pupils. It is not enough that the teacher treat her pupils properly as a whole. The individuals all differ from each other. Each pupil is unique, and therefore needs treatment adapted to his peculiar make-up. The teacher must establish this individual relationship with each pupil if the highest results are to be achieved.

It is natural and easy for the teacher to be fond of her likable pupils. The dear little girl who is nearly perfect is of course a joy, and we love her. However, this little girl very likely has a nice home, and lives in an atmosphere of love and sympathy. She needs love and sympathy at school too, but not as much as if she had none at home.

There is, however, the boy who does not know anything about sympathy as far as his home treatment is concerned, but who has an unquenchable desire for it nevertheless. He is probably not well dressed, and may be backward in his studies. He may even be of a bad disposition.

If any pupil in the room needs sympathy, it is this

rough, ragged, troublesome boy. It may indeed be that that is all he needs. It is possible that sympathy is the only thing necessary to bring out his better self. Yet too often we give our sympathy to the lovable children, and withhold it from those who need it most. Of course this is natural; but the true teacher is not satisfied with the easy and natural attitude alone. She has higher ideals than that. She sees in every neglected child her opportunity for service to that child and to humanity. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The Gospels are full of the strongest and clearest statements showing that the Great Teacher had foremost in his mind the outcasts.

The teacher should not postpone the establishment of this individual connection until the pupil shall have committed some offence which needs correction. On that basis some pupils would never need a private interview. It is necessary to establish personal friendship as soon as possible with each pupil; and if the teacher has any reason to suspect that a certain pupil will cause trouble he is one of the very first who should be sought out and given a copious share of the teacher's regard so that the possible trouble may be avoided.

For instance, here is a large boy who looks as if he might not have a proper attitude toward teacher or school. He has at home a fine horse and buggy or *an automobile*, which he is allowed to drive. If the

teacher will do him the great favor of allowing him to do her a favor, and will take a drive with him, and show her appreciation thereof, he will feel that he has a superior claim on her — that somehow he is not only a pupil but a personal friend. This relationship will hold him straight when he might otherwise go wrong; and more than that, it will open the way to the teacher for the implanting of higher ideals in him.

In some schools teachers have a card index system, by means of which their pupils are observed, studied, and their qualities tabulated with much care. This is a very valuable plan provided it does not result in the teacher's regarding her pupils *merely* as subjects of natural history. It has been noticed that some professional charity workers have so developed the business side of philanthropy that they have refined out of themselves that human sympathy which the poor so much need. There is the same danger in the unwise absorption of teachers in child study. The card system is a help to the memory, a means of convenience, but should never become an end in itself.

In a certain school there was a ragged boy about eleven years old. His teacher was one of those who pursue their routine with no special interest in anything. She knew little about the home life of her pupils, and cared less.

One morning this boy was absent from school, and he did not return for three days. The teacher was much annoyed that her register had been spoiled by these three absent marks. On the fourth day he was in his seat; and after roll call she said to him in a stern voice, "Mike, what kept you out of school the

last three days?" Mike looked at her in a somewhat startled manner, then put his head on his hands, and burst into tears. The teacher then rose in her wrath, and said, "Quit your sniveling at once! Is it not enough that you should spoil my register? Must you also act like a sissy as soon as I ask you a decent question? Now I want no more of this. You get out your books and get to work or I'll see that you get something worth pouting about, and that right away!"

Now the fact was that little Mike's father was a drunkard, and Mike had to sell papers early and late in order to support his mother; and Mike's finer feelings were harrowed every evening by the cruelties and brutalities that are found in the drunkard's home. Finally Mike's mother found her lot too heavy to bear, and she drooped, and passed away. Mike's absence from school had been caused by his mother's death. She had been buried the day before; and when Mike saw the lid close on her coffin he felt that he had lost the only friend he had in the world, and his heart was broken. The next morning when he reached school — nay, long before that morning — he stood in desperate need of the teacher's sympathy and love; and to come to school with a broken heart, only to be pierced by the unfeeling criticism of this heartless teacher, was more than he could bear.

Do you suppose that this teacher ever did any good to little Mike? Do you suppose she ever afterwards *could* do any good to him? No — her power to influence Mike, if it ever did exist, was *certainly* now gone forever. Of course, the teacher

would not have been so severe if she had known the circumstances; but how can she be excused for her ignorance? The reason why she did not know the situation is because she had no interest in Mike. To her he was merely number ten on the register and sat on the tenth seat of the left-hand row. Do you suppose that if she had had a love for this boy he could have been absent a single day without her knowing why? It is probable that many young teachers do not realize the great need of sympathy in the treatment of pupils. Perhaps the majority of young teachers come from refined homes with good parents and congenial friends. They have been carefully shielded from contact with the grosser side of life; and when they begin their teaching they are in ignorance of the deplorable amount of misery and sin that exists in some of the homes from which at least a few of their pupils come. Until they have some idea of the baleful environment that warps the lives of these children, they cannot establish a point of contact with them. They live in different worlds. To the unfortunate boy the teacher's home would be heaven; while to the teacher that boy's home would be perdition. Hence the indispensable need of the teacher visiting the homes, and seeing how the children live, if she would reach them.

It is not meant to convey the idea that the sympathetic teacher must be loose in her school discipline — that she should be so full of sympathy for her pupils as to let them all do just as they please. This would be a degeneration of sympathy into weakness. The teacher should be so full of sympathy for the

best welfare of the children that she will hold them up strictly to high standards. Tasks must be accomplished. Order must prevail. One of the main purposes of the school is to instill by practice the performance of all assigned duties. Besides, pupils like a strict teacher if she is fair, and dislike a teacher who is too easy. It is only necessary that these high standards be maintained by a teacher who loves her pupils, who can put herself into their places, and who is a friend in time of joy and of sorrow.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN BY DIRECT MORAL INSTRUCTION*

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. — THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

DR. EMERSON E. WHITE, in his book on "School Management," treats at some length and with much force the need for direct and systematic moral instruction in schools. He rightly maintains that it is not necessary to be forever "moralizing" in order to give instruction in character building; and he asserts that the wise teacher will do much more good through systematic lessons than by merely seizing upon occasions as they arise.


It has already been urged that individual correction should be private and confidential as far as possible, and that there is little call for public or general criticism of a class. If this precept is followed, it is inevitable that there are scores of virtues that will never get any attention in the school. Their importance and their cultivation may be urged upon certain individuals who are conspicuously lacking in them, but the school as a whole will get no such instruction.

For instance, politeness is a virtue that is universally needful. In the home, the school, the church,



in business, on vacations, — everywhere there is a sphere for the exercise of this quality. But if instruction in this subject is incidental, it is altogether possible that it will never be broadly treated in any one year. There are young people who are polite in their homes, but at a summer boarding house they are utterly oblivious of true politeness and consideration of others. They disturb the comfort of the other vacationists day and night, and do not for a moment consider that they are guilty of bad manners. They feel like the small boy, who the night before the family went on vacation, said in his evening prayer, "Good-by, Lord, I'm going to the sea-shore!"

If the teacher will give a fifteen-minute lesson on politeness, showing its fundamental nature, its universal principle, and will apply it to the several spheres in which the children move, it will surely do some good to some of them. They will not think that politeness is for the home and the school, but not for the street; neither will they think that politeness is for other people but not for their own family. They will begin to see that politeness is in the heart as a foundation, and in the outward life as its expression. Usually children are polite because they are trained to be polite; and in this the school can do much, especially for such as do not get this training in their homes. Through systematic lessons in the virtues, therefore, there is likely to be a treatment of many phases of conduct that would not otherwise come up for consideration in the usual course of school life. Furthermore, such instruction is a strong influence in making children thoughtful in all their conduct. If



there is any one factor designed to expel frivolousness from a young person, it is a feeling of consideration for others. Some little children find it difficult to look at their own actions from the standpoint of another. They cannot put themselves in the place of other people. It is said that certain boys do not have the slightest idea that their whip hurts the dog until the same whip is used on them. As soon as they have been made sensible of the pain, their cruelty ceases.

The study of politeness above suggested would bring before pupils phases that are new to them. Often their idea of politeness is the raising of their caps to ladies, and the saying of "Thank you" for favors. Unless the deeper aspects of politeness are pointed out by the teacher such ideas lead to veneer, to superficial formality, which tends toward hypocrisy. But if the teacher gives instruction in the fundamental principles of politeness, shows its universality, its importance for one's self as well as for others, she cannot fail to exert an uplifting influence on the children.

How many children realize that the rigid etiquette and formality of life at the court of kings is not only designed to display the grandeur of the royal estate but also to engender and maintain a feeling of profound respect in the hearts of the courtiers? How many children realize that by rising when a lady enters the room they are not only showing honor to her but are developing a sense of respect for all womanhood? And how many are sensible of the fact that this feeling of respect cannot be realized to the highest degree unless it is manifested in the

forms found best adapted for the purpose through the experience of many generations of society? These things are not learned of themselves. They need to be taught.

It is to be feared that some teachers hesitate to undertake this instruction because they realize that to teach politeness or any other virtue with power it is necessary for the teacher to be an exemplar for the pupils. The standard thus set for the teacher is so high that she is reluctant to assume it. Several considerations may, however, be noted. One is that the teacher *should* be a model for her pupils; and that whether she will or not, she *is* a model for her pupils. There is no escape; and possibly the establishment of a high standard may be an influence to help her to reach more nearly the requirements of a model.

Then again, the teacher should never pretend that she is a perfect woman any more than pupils should pretend to be perfect children. The teacher who says in effect, "These are the standards we should set up for us; these are the ideals we should strive to reach. We shall never reach perfection; we all sometimes fail. But the more we really try to improve, the more nearly we shall approach our standard" — that teacher will place herself on a level with her pupils, all striving for improvement.

If a teacher is not willing to put forth any effort toward self-culture, if she in her life and acts contradicts her teachings, she had better not undertake this direct moral training. She cannot possibly teach pupils to be kind if she is unkind herself. She cannot possibly teach pupils to speak gently if she violates

her teachings by scolding and sharp criticism. *But*, such teacher ought to examine herself carefully as to whether she should not leave the teaching profession and give place to some one whose life and words more nearly coincide.

"But children dislike moralizing." True, if the teacher is forever saying, "Now, Johnny, be a good boy" — "Mary, be nice," etc., *ad nauseam*. But this is not what is meant by direct moral instruction in the schools. If properly done, all experience teaches that pupils welcome these discussions, and are more interested in them than in many of their regular lessons. For example, a principal once gave a thirty-minute lesson every day for three weeks in June to the graduating class in a three-year high school, using as a basis the treatment of practical ethics, given in Haven's "Moral Philosophy." When these pupils bade their principal good-by at the end of the graduation exercises they said with one voice that they had enjoyed these lessons more than anything else in the course, and had been greatly helped thereby.

Teachers can get better results in the teaching of history by direct instruction in the subject than by all the indirect instruction that can be gained in the reading lessons, the encyclopedia, and books on biography. Direct instruction in all other subjects is just as necessary for adequate acquirement. There is direct instruction now in music, drawing, industrial work — in everything the schools attempt. Similarly, instruction in ethics will never reach a maximum of effectiveness unless it is direct and regular. It will never be what it should be unless teachers are as well

prepared to present the subject as the manual training teacher is to teach manual training, or the teacher of grammar is to teach grammar. And if properly taught, direct moral instruction will be far more valuable to children than the correction of false syntax or the compounding of interest. Emerson's judgment of a country was the kind of men and women it produces. The judgment of a school might likewise be the kind of boys and girls it produces. For this work, direct moral instruction is indispensable.

John King Clark has built up in a large New York school, of which he is principal, a system for teaching morals and ethics that is practical and simple. The outlines actually used by his teachers are given in his "Systematic Moral Education."

**CHAPTER XIV**  
***REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH***  
***COMPANIONSHIP***

I live not in myself, but I become a  
Portion of that around me. — BYRON.

“I AM a part of all that I have met.” This sentence, which Tennyson puts in the mouth of the aged Ulysses, is profoundly true and significant. It has a fourfold application, which gives it a scope as broad as life.

Ulysses had had an adventurous life. He had been among the leaders in the ten years' war before Troy. For twenty years thereafter he had wandered about the seas, meeting with strange people, strange scenes, and strange adventures. Then he resumed his kingship on the island of Ithaca; and in his last days, as he looked back upon his varied career, and especially when he saw himself an associate of kings and world renowned warriors, he exclaimed with pride,

“I have been in battle with my peers!”

and then said with equal pride,

“I am a part of all that I have met.”

This thought may be amplified thus: “Great men have I met. I have been an actor in great scenes,

stirring adventures, vicissitudes by land and sea; and from all these have I imbibed their essential qualities. The great men have given me freely of their heroism; the great scenes have imprinted themselves indelibly on my mind; the adventures and vicissitudes have given me courage, resourcefulness, patience, perseverance, and faith in the gods. Hence I have literally been made by what I have met. I am the sum, the embodiment, of these scenes."

On the other hand, Ulysses might have reasoned thus: "When before Troy I gave to my peers all the courage and skill which I possessed, I contributed part of my life to the great Trojan conquest. Then during the twenty years of wandering I put my intrepidity into my sailors, and into all whom I encountered. And now, after a long life I feel that every person I have met has within him some of my life; and every adventure I saw received the impress of some of my qualities."

Ulysses boasted of this influence, either as he received it, or as he gave it. He was proud of it in either aspect. He became noble because of the nobility of the peers with whom for ten years he vied in deeds of valor, or because he gave noble qualities to all he met.

All writers and thinkers agree as to the very vital importance of young people securing the proper associations. "Try to frequent the company of your betters," says Thackeray. "In books and life that is the most wholesome society. Learn to admire rightly; the great pleasure of life is that. Note what great men admired: they admired great things;

narrow spirits admire basely and worship meanly."

It is of very great moment that a man who is a king should associate with his peers; and if he is not a king, that he should associate with the most royal men he can find.

Association with inferiors has a powerful tendency to drag one down. It is almost impossible to keep oneself from falling from the high standard he might otherwise maintain. Stable boys may be just as good as anybody else; but "gossiping" with them, as Ruskin says, takes the mind from things that kings and queens enjoy, and draws it down to a much lower level.

The boy meets a fine man for the first time. They enter into conversation, and the boy gives attention to the words of his new acquaintance. They discuss things interesting to both. The boy gets a glimpse of the thoughts that occupy the mind of the man, and to which he assigns some importance. The more they meet, the more intimate they become; the more the boy enters into the interests and ideals of the man; the more his own ideals are elevated by the communion; and step by step the boy rises to the level of the man's thinking. The man's ideals become the boy's ideals; and the boy has been developed into a fine man because he has become a part of him whom he has met.

Another boy has no such opportunity of meeting a great man, but he has Weems's "Life of Washington," "Pilgrim's Progress," "Æsop's Fables," a "History of the United States," and above all, the Bible. He reads these books over and over again. The more he reads them, the more his mind mounts to the rising



ideals they present. By and by they control not only his style of writing and speaking, but his very thinking; and through his thinking his actions and his character. In other words, Abraham Lincoln was largely the embodiment of the men and scenes he met through the printed page. It may be affirmed with much confidence that the most effective principle for young people to follow is, "Give your attention to the higher things."

The students who attended Wellesley College in the eighties and early nineties pursued the customary college curriculum with the usual gratifying results. They learned much in the classroom, much in the library, much from their classmates; but they enjoyed the inestimable privilege, alas! now gone for all time, of personal contact with Alice Freeman, "the most persuasive personality I have ever met," as Lyman Abbott characterizes her. "The finest example thus far set before American womanhood," possessing the highest ideals herself, living her ideals to a remarkable degree, so influenced her students through personal contact and otherwise, that they rose toward the standard of her own life. In this case the girls were not so much associating with one of their betters as with a divine being who was yet thoroughly human, and had known all the struggles of adversity. To be associated with such a personality is a privilege and a blessing that comes to few persons in a lifetime.

There are some people who believe that Heaven exists here and now; that the soul is immortal, but that this immortality consists only in the parts of ourselves that we put into other people. We give

one person an impulse toward goodness, or give him a distinct contribution toward his welfare — in other words, do him some good. That good is a part of our life. Through him it goes into some one else, and so on, forever. This is immortality, say some, and the only immortality.

Few will agree that this creed is sufficient; but it embodies the great truth that the good we do lives in others, and that its influence is immeasurable. What a privilege Alice Freeman enjoyed of having her rich life become part of the lives of the thousands of Wellesley girls whom she knew, and the multitudes of others whom she did not know!

The same privilege is for the teacher. She takes charge of a school, and through her conscious and unconscious influence her pupils will imbibe her life and become more and more like her. Her ideals become their ideals. The things she considers worth while the children will consider worth while. What she does, what she says, the books she reads, the things she loves, indeed, the whole outgoing of her life, molds and transforms the pupils more and more into *what she is*. Great the opportunity — great the responsibility!

It is very evident that this becoming like those we meet has an obverse side. If the associates of Ulysses from his boyhood up had been his peers, but instead of being kings had been corner loafers, the world would never have heard of him or of them. The boy who under proper auspices imbibes the ideals of fine men, directly or through books, and is ennobled thereby, will just as certainly, under improper auspices,

imbibe the ideals of low men, directly or through books, and will be degraded thereby. If he associates with the base, and enters into the things that interest them, he will become part of that life, and go to destruction.

Lastly, the evil man gives of his life wherever he goes, and it becomes part of all he meets. If this were immortality (and it is a portion of immortality), what a frightful picture! To have one's blasting influence continue for all time — to be forever degrading the innocent — to give pain for joy, despair for hope, hell for heaven, world without end! Surely some would pause in their wickedness if they could be made to feel the consequences of their acts.

To the true teacher this doctrine is full of encouragement. Sometimes she feels as if her pupils were not improving as they should — that she is getting little response to her efforts to build up their characters. But let her consider that her greatest influence is silent — that her teachings find lodgment in the hearts of the children and sometimes do not immediately come to fruition. But by and by, when the seed has lain for the proper length of time beneath the soil, it will come up little by little, and in the end may show a rich harvest.

## CHAPTER XV

### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH IDEALS

One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.

— SCOTT.

HUGH BLACK has well said, "The ideal is *the real as it should be*." Perhaps nowhere else in all literature has this great truth been expressed more clearly and more simply. If the real man were what he should be, he would be ideal. So would the landscape, the picture, the tree, the work. The more ideal elements anything possesses the more permanent it will be, and the more worthy. Our purpose should be to introduce the greatest possible number of ideal elements into our lives, and as teachers, to reach our pupils by instilling these elements into their hearts.

The sources of these elements are, of course, to be found in nature and in the fine arts. To the appreciative eye every flower, shrub, tree, landscape, mountain, is full of the ideal. The condemnation which Peter Bell in Wordsworth's poem brought on himself was that

"A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more."

He saw nothing in it but a yellow flower — no beauty, no God, not even an object of interest. Hence his whole life was on the low plane of a real with no ideal elements.

Surround the child with high-class pictures. More and more they will make to his heart their effective appeal. They will unconsciously elevate his tastes and his thoughts. More and more they will tend to make the inartistic and the coarse distasteful to him. His feelings and his manners will be refined. Life will have a meaning for him. He will see the beauty of the other arts and of nature. If this unconscious teaching is supplemented by instruction, its value will be largely increased.

In these days of victrolas there is little reason why children should not enjoy what formerly was the privilege of the few — good music. Music does through the ear what painting does through the eye — reaches the soul. When a child or a man has once been thrilled through and through by a strain of noble music, he will forever live on a higher plane than before.

Music is more universal than painting. When the child is born there is rejoicing and music. When he worships there is music. When he is in the house of mirth there is music. It soothes and inspires, it comforts, and expresses joy. At the grave there is the solemn hymn and the funeral march. Everywhere there is a place for music; and schools are beginning to recognize its wide appeal.

But just as we should seek the society of our betters if we wish to improve ourselves, just as the books

that do us most good are those which make us reach up, so the music that benefits us must be that which lifts us up. There is a distinct danger that the very general use of music in homes will lead to a taste for the two-step, the one-step, and other kinds of so-called popular music. There is a tendency in recent years for every person to dance. The demand is for dance music. In some instances people who are very fond of dancing care nothing for music of a higher class. Music that is not adapted for dancing has no meaning for them. This was illustrated at a large hotel, where the guests had assembled, and were waiting for the musicians before beginning the dance. In order to "fill in" the interval one of the guests sat down at the piano and played the "Evening Star" from Tannhauser. To his utter amazement a number of guests stepped on the floor and began to "dance it." It meant even less to them than the primrose meant to Peter Bell.

The school should try to counteract this degradation of a noble art by giving opportunity for hearing music of a high character. The way to educate taste in music is to bring pupils into contact with good music again and again, and to point out its beauties. This leads inevitably to a keener appreciation of all the arts. It is the secret in poetry, in painting and in sculpture. The school should waste no money on worthless records. Only such selections as stand for something worthy should be bought.


The fact is that much of what is called music is not music at all. It is only mechanical skill, finger exercises, tintinnabulation. It bears the same relation

to true music that the chromo does to true painting. It has a tendency to deprave the taste, and has therefore no place in the school, and should have no place anywhere else.

The art that most directly reaches the heart, however, is poetry. It is more tangible than music, and its language is more definite. Through the medium of words it can be held in the mind and contemplated at all times. If it is the mind that makes the body rich, as Shakespeare says, it is poetry that makes the mind rich.

Macaulay argues strongly that a commercial age is not favorable to the development of poetry. A few generations ago our forefathers often spent their evenings with their families, reading aloud the latest poems of Emerson, Longfellow, Poe, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. They were familiar also with Shakespeare, Milton, and other great poets. In our present industrial age there is less of family gathering for any purpose; and it is to be feared that the poets receive scant attention because of the more direct pursuit of business and pleasure. Thus it is inevitable that a family should lose whatever of good there is in poetry; and it is at least questionable whether the things that displace it are of equal value.

In poetry as in music and painting, there is the worthy and the unworthy. To some people poetry is rhyme. They cannot discriminate between doggerel and epic. Of course to such poetry has no meaning, no message, no appeal. They feel that the reading of poetry is a waste of time, and that a love of poetry is an indication of an effeminate mind. It



may do for dreamers, but has no claims on practical men and women.

But consider a moment that the great names in the history of the world are those of poets — Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Milton; and many others. Practically every industry in the time of Elizabeth has perished, but its poetry remains. The fine arts make the most permanent contributions to any age.


Those who despise poetry simply show their ignorance. If they have nothing to learn from Shakespeare, the fault is not in Shakespeare. They simply classify themselves among those who have no time nor taste for the higher things of life. The rush of the automobile is more pleasant to them than a noble thought, and the tripping of the toe than the masterpieces of Wagner or Beethoven.

The teacher who is alive to her opportunities, who is filled with a desire to bring the real child more nearly up to the ideal, will give much attention to the study of the ideals embodied in poetry. Dr. White has pointed out that a fine thought is greatly enhanced through its beautiful expression. Poetry not only concerns itself with ideals, but its medium of communication is through magic language. Hence its effect on the child is probably greater than that of any other fine art.

The beautiful poems of the school readers should be regarded by the teacher as treasures. She should plainly show the pupils that she loves them. Her very enthusiasm will communicate itself to the pupils. It is entirely certain that if a poem means nothing to the teacher, it will mean little to the pupils. But



by bringing out the truths of the poems, and showing their application, and by expressing appreciation of their beauties, and by frequent thoughtful, reverent repetition of these poems, their ideals will more and more become a part of the lives of the children; the real will receive more and more of the ideal, and their characters will be formed of the imperishable elements of true beauty.



## CHAPTER XVI

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH INSTRUCTION IN HEALTH*

Health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of; a blessing that money cannot buy. — IZAAK WALTON.

CARLYLE says: "There is no kind of achievement you could make in the world that is equal to perfect health."

The following is from John Locke: "He that sinks his vessel by overloading it, though it be with gold and silver and precious stones, will give his owner but an ill account of his voyage."

In spite of the fact that an increasing amount of attention is given to the subject of personal health and hygiene, there are still many homes in which no definite and purposeful instruction is given to children in regard to the care of their bodies. Go into any rural school and ask pupils between the ages of six and sixteen whether they regularly take a morning bath, and you are very fortunate if one in forty raises his hand. Ask how many take a bath regularly once a week, and not all hands will even then be raised. Then ask how many drink a glass of water before breakfast, or brush their teeth, or sleep with open windows during the winter, and you will be impressed with the need of further effort in teaching personal hygiene.

It is a curious fact that if any commodity costs nothing it is not considered valuable, however important it may be; but as soon as a price is set on it, its value is more appreciated. For example, in nearly all communities there are delightful walks, with beautiful trees and flowers and singing birds and pleasant views, and there is health in every step. Yet there are very few who seize the opportunity. But if some one were to put a fence around a tract of land, with entrance at a gate only, and were to charge an admission fee of twenty-five cents, the number of walkers would be greatly increased.

Likewise if a physician were to charge a good sum for medical advice, and would direct the patient to take a morning bath and a glass of water, the advice would be followed, and water would seem more valuable.

Nature indeed offers us good health free of cost. Water to clean us outwardly and inwardly, and to give us oxygen; air to serve the same purpose; hills and valleys and outdoor work to give us exercise and appetite — the poorest family can enjoy all these gifts, and needs little more for good health. Yet these priceless gifts, being free, are not esteemed.

In the schools of New Jersey, and doubtless in some other states, there is found in every room a chart prepared by the State Board of Health. This chart is a portion of the campaign against tuberculosis; but it is a compendium of expert advice on hygiene couched in the simplest possible language. Its value cannot be overestimated. The teacher might well say to her pupils, "If you were to go to a physician

who stands among the foremost in this State, and pay him ten dollars for advice, you would consider it very important, and would observe it with care. The State Board of Health is composed of a number of the foremost physicians in this State. You need not go to the expense of visiting their offices, or of paying a consultation fee. On this chart they have united their knowledge and skill in giving you prescriptions of the highest value. You need pay no fees whatever. Are the prescriptions therefore the less important?"

The best plan to use in connection with the observance of these or other health rules is to begin with certain ones that are very easy to obey, and add to these from time to time, finally completing the whole list. A certain teacher of a rural school of forty pupils urged them to observe what he called "the five points," and every morning he asked how many had done them. They were, "Wash your face, wash your hands, brush your teeth, drink a glass of water, eat your breakfast." In a short time this teacher had established these five habits in all the children. The following year a new teacher, hearing of this plan, continued it, and added thereto. Thus in a pleasant, easy manner the children were given lessons worth more than all the technical physiology in the course of study.

Children often feel that a morning bath implies a bathroom and bathtub. Of course both are convenient, but not essential. A pitcher of water with a wash bowl or basin, a cloth and a towel, are all the necessary materials; and to "wipe and dry the body

quickly every day," as the health chart directs, requires but two or three minutes of time. Nor is a cold sleeping room a sufficient reason for omitting the morning bath, inasmuch as the reaction caused by the rubbing will do more to heat the body than artificial heat or clothing.

There is small wonder that Carlyle used the strong language at the beginning of this chapter. All his life he suffered the pangs of dyspepsia. Not only did this disease sap his strength and give him great distress, but it colored his thinking, so that he became morose and fretful. No man can see the sunny side of life when afflicted with the pangs of indigestion. It may be that Carlyle was conscious not only of what he suffered but what he missed when he laid supreme emphasis on good health.

Indigestion is usually caused by unwise eating — too much food, poorly cooked food, hasty eating, or eating what the system cannot digest. Hence it is of great importance that our girls should be taught scientific cooking; and it is of still greater importance that pupils should be taught the dangers of improper eating. By direct instruction on these points the teacher can be of great service to the children.

There are three classes of students — those who study properly, those who study too little, and those who study too much. In some schools so much attention is given to the second class that the third is permitted to continue overworking until some of them have irreparably injured their health. It is to them that the words of John Locke previously quoted have special application.

A young man of eighteen once entered a normal school with the avowed purpose of completing a two-year course in one year. He did it, but he shattered his system; and a year after his graduation the grasses were growing on his grave.

A girl graduated at the head of her class from a large city high school. She was appointed to give the valedictory. About a week before the graduation exercises she became ill. The physicians diagnosed the case as appendicitis, and advised an immediate operation. The girl absolutely refused to submit to this operation until after she had given her valedictory, and nothing could be done to change her mind. She gave the valedictory, was rushed to a hospital, but it was too late. She gave her life for the sake of reciting the honor essay.

Another girl insisted on studying until midnight every evening. Her high school principal warned her many times that she was shattering her nerves, but she refused to listen. She too graduated at the head of the class, but has never since been able to do a day's work.

It is very much easier to get a slack student to give enough attention to his studies than to get one who over-studies to be reasonable. To the latter the teacher must emphasize in season and out the value of moderation in all things—self-control even in good things. She must point out the great handicap in life that comes from a strong mind fettered by a weak body. She must take this matter up with the parents. She must control the home work of the pupils. She must remove all artificial incentives,

and other unhealthy stimuli. Every possible effort should be made to see that these bright minds are reared in bodies of maximum efficiency.

The work of the teacher of today is much more complex than a generation ago. She is expected to do many things that her predecessors never thought of. But amid all her duties there is none that has a greater claim on her attention than that of training her pupils to take care of their bodies, so that they may have an adequate physical basis to do effectively their work in the world.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH REMOVING FALSE IDEAS*

What error leads must err. — SHAKESPEARE.

"The great secret of success in life is to be ready when the opportunity comes." — DISRAELI.

"Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance." — SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"The winds and waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators." — GIBBON.

"All actual heroes are essential men,  
And all men possible heroes." — MRS. BROWNING.

"Raleigh found the tower of London a convenient place for writing a History of the World." — HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE.

"Happy are they to whom life brings, not ease and physical comfort, but great chances of heroism, sacrifice, and service." — MABIE.

"Genius is about two per cent inspiration; all the rest is perspiration." — EDISON.

THE eight extracts here given are from workers in different ages and different spheres. Scores more could be quoted; and after many pages were filled, the diligent student could not find a single one in which emphasis is laid on luck as a factor in life. In the eight just quoted the word luck is not even mentioned. The ambitious and successful man simply gives no place to it whatever in his calculations.



For him it does not exist. And, of course, for nobody else does it exist.

Yet there is in the minds of a surprisingly large number of people, especially of those who have achieved little or nothing, a latent and sometimes often expressed idea that one man succeeds because he has luck, and another fails because luck is against him. Of course, if a man holds this idea, his children are more or less imbued with it, and the teacher must expel it from their minds.

The child is at the beginning of life's road. He has imbibed instructions, ideas, tendencies from his home as to how to proceed on his journey. He has had little opportunity to make his own observations, and has had no experience. The work of the teacher is to give the child the benefit of her own experiences and observations. She is presumably educated — that is, she has learned in the schools how the journey through life may best be made. All this learning, experience and observation should now be bestowed on the child, so that he may take no false or unnecessary steps, and may not go wrong; and if his home or his associates have given him wrong directions, the teacher must detect them and correct them as speedily as possible. Perhaps the best way to do this is to point out to the child the elements of success as they are exemplified in the lives of great men and women. The child has a natural respect for the names he meets in his textbooks and in the library books; and he will be much interested in learning the particulars of their lives. The teacher should make a definite search for such factors in these lives as led to their

success, and these should be purposefully taught to the pupils.

Alice Freeman Palmer has already been mentioned in this book as a very remarkable woman. Her life, written by her husband, Professor Palmer, should be read by every teacher many times, for her own inspiration as well as for use among the pupils. While, of course, Mrs. Palmer had a remarkable personality, yet at fourteen there was little to distinguish her from hundreds of other girls of her age. Starting from that common basis, the girls of a school will note with great interest the courage and perseverance she displayed while making her way through college, her heroic struggle to overcome poor health and poverty, her fidelity to every duty, and her noble accomplishments. They will note that no luck was apparent in her career. She was made president of Wellesley at twenty-six because, as Disraeli says, she was "ready when the opportunity came." Many other educated women were living at that time, but of them all Alice Freeman was most "ready." Hence her selection, and her subsequent great success.

Then there is Napoleon Bonaparte, who when a young man, was usually in his attic room engaged in deep study when his schoolmates were playing; who once worked at a problem in mathematics from Friday evening until Monday morning, getting the correct result at last; whose customary working day was eighteen hours; who when in command of the Army of Italy did not average more than two or three hours of sleep a night; who lived a marvelous career because of his knowledge, his energy, his perseverance.

He maintained that his success in war was due to his careful attention to every detail of strategy and tactics, so as to be ready for any emergency that might occur. In other words, he succeeded because of his intelligent use of the common qualities that should be found in the make-up of all young men.

Henry Kirke White learned Greek while walking to and from a lawyer's office in which he was employed. There was no particular genius about this performance—simply an intelligent use of spare moments, of which many people have a large number.

George Washington showed by his career in the French and Indian War that he was the best qualified man to command the Continental Army when the war began in 1775; so there was no particular luck in his selection by the Continental Congress. In 1789 there was no question that the ablest man in the country to take the helm was Washington, and he was elected president. There was little of the brilliant genius in him—only the world-old plain qualities of fine manhood.

History is full of examples that prove conclusively that "every man is the architect of his own fortune"; that "fools prate of luck"; that there is nothing mysterious about success; that there are few chances in success; and that life presents a "fair field and no favors."

Neighborhood biography furnishes interesting examples for the teacher to use. In all communities there are persons more or less prominent locally or in the county or state. These men and women are known to the children, either personally or by name.

The teacher should become familiar with the particulars of their lives, and should point out to the pupils how their success was founded on the fundamental virtues that may be acquired by all.

By such a course the teacher can do a world of good in imbuing her children with correct principles, thereby expelling from their minds false ideas. It is more important that a pupil be ambitious than that he be proficient in geography. It is more necessary for him to have courage than a knowledge of grammar. Indeed, proficiency in studies is only a means to aid the ambitious young man or woman to advance rapidly and achieve great things. It has little value as an end.

If the glory of a school is in the kind of boys and girls it produces, then a teacher's supreme object should be to instill in them correct principles of life, after which they may be left to make their own careers with perfect assurance that they will become useful men and women.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH ALLEGORY*

*Allegory dwells in a transparent palace. — LEMIERRE.*

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE says: "A man is specially and divinely fortunate, not when his conditions are easy, but when they evoke the very best that is in him."

Children who cannot thoroughly grasp the implications of such a sentiment can see them more plainly when they are put in the form of a story. The following is not a complete likeness, but it appeals to children, especially to such as live among the hills or mountains:

Every boy and girl is going up the side of a mountain at the top of which is the place called success. There are many paths, some quite different from others. Here is one — a broad, macadamized road, going along at a beautiful grade, with fine curves; and lo! here is a young man going up in an automobile! How rapidly he travels, with no exertion on his part. He is wafted up, and the whole trip is a pleasure.

Here is another road, also a good one, but not made of stone. The youth is driving up with a horse and buggy — not so fast as in an automobile, but

still going at a good pace. He sits back enjoying the landscape, and looking with a smile at us who are trudging along on foot.

Now we examine more closely our own road. It is not a road, only a path. We go along a steep ascent. Then we come to a rock, and after much effort remove it. Soon we come to another, which our best efforts cannot move, so we climb over it, bruising our hands and knees. Oh, how tired we are! We rest a little while, and then look ahead. The path is not clear. There is in the way the largest rock we have yet encountered. Surely we cannot remove it, neither can we climb over it. Shall we then sit down and cry? No, indeed. Let us go forward, and take a closer look at it. Why, here is a way around it that we couldn't see until we were almost against it. Truly this is not so hard a place as the other was. We have really not thus far met with anything that we could not surmount in some way. What is this on ahead? Oh, merely some loose stones and a few thorns that grow across the path. On we go. We are gaining in strength, we are gaining in courage, we have confidence that we can in some way overcome any obstacle we meet because we have learned how to approach it. By and by we reach the summit!

Now let us compare ourselves with the other two young men. Have they gained any strength through their trip up the mountain? Have they gained any courage? Any ability to overcome obstacles? Have they experienced the joy of surmounting what seemed insurmountable? No. Their single advantage (?)


was that they had a pleasant journey and did not need to soil their hands and clothes!

Let no poor boy envy the well-to-do. He is by force of circumstances compelled to take the rough and rocky path which he would not himself choose, rather than the easy path, which wealth chooses for its children. Hence the poor boy gains the strength that the rich boy misses. The poor boy gets the practice in the qualities of manhood that the rich boy cannot experience. The poor boy becomes his own master, the rich boy is carried along by somebody else. All through life it is the hard things that count for something, the easy things that count for little.

A vessel on the Saguenay River was once crossing a bay, headed straight for what seemed a solid cliff. As she approached the cliff, the passengers speculated as to where the vessel would find its entrance. But no sign of an entrance could be seen until she was within a stone's throw of the cliff. Then a sudden turn showed an opening through which she sailed calmly on into the waters beyond.

So it is in life. Even the most courageous person sometimes comes to a point where there is a rock ahead which he seems unable to scale; but as he draws nearer he finds either that the rock is not as large as it seemed and can be scaled, or there is some way of rolling it away or passing around it.

Many boys and girls are deterred from aiming for a higher education because they are poor, or because they live in a remote part of the state, or for some other reason. The difficulties in the way seem



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insurmountable. But the life of Mrs. Palmer and of hundreds of others prove that the rocks seem bigger than they really are, and that they may be surmounted if the youth will but approach them with a stout heart and a resolute will!



## CHAPTER XIX

### REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH TACT

A handful of common sense is worth a bushel of learning.

— OLD PROVERB.

THE word *tact* means *touch*. We say a person has tact when he knows how to handle men and situations. The citizen has tact when, at a public meeting, he allays strong feeling between two persons by means of quieting remarks. Some people have tact in handling horses. Henry Ward Beecher had tact in controlling audiences. Some parents have tact in governing their children.

In its last analysis tact is nothing more than good judgment; and just as the power of judgment may be developed, so tact may be cultivated. Those who have little to start with can by persistent attention gain more and more of that quality without which much accomplishment is hardly possible.

Many teachers who are now conspicuously successful had a hard time to control their pupils during their first years of teaching; and if they were asked wherein lay their weakness they would doubtless reply, "I did not know how to handle pupils. I did not use good judgment in my relations with them and in my relations with their parents." In other words, they lacked tact.

Another word for tact is the modern word adjustment. When an organism fits into its environment at all points it is said to be completely adjusted. When the teacher is properly in touch with the children there is perfect adjustment. When she is "out of touch" with any situation, there is necessarily more or less discord.

Perhaps the best illustration of the possession of tact in American history is found in Benjamin Franklin. Of him the historian Bancroft says, "He never spoke a word too soon; he never spoke a word too late; he never failed to speak the right word in the right place."

Children can never be permanently reached by false alarms. After a boy has been frightened into obedience a number of times by the assurance that a bear in the woods will eat him up if he does not obey, he will naturally learn in time that the speaker is lying; and a continuation of that policy will soon render the child almost uncontrollable. The intelligent parent will never employ such tactless and ill-advised methods of securing submission.

Teachers are sometimes tactless in "seeing too much." Whenever a child moves, the eye of the teacher is on him. When he seeks for something in his desk she wants to know what he is looking for. When he is out of sight for a minute she asks him what he was doing. In other words, she feels that she must have knowledge of everything that goes on while she is in charge of the children. This leads to an almost irresistible desire on the part of the pupils to do as many things as possible that she cannot

discover; and there is often more downright dishonesty engendered by a teacher of this description than by one who has better tact in seeing things.

A boy of twelve in the seventh grade had for some time been hard to manage. After several private conversations the principal was gradually getting him to see the error of his ways; and one day the boy agreed to try for one week so to conduct himself that he would not be sent to the office. Four days passed, and the boy was not heard from by the principal; but on the fifth day he came to the office, his temper evidently aroused. The principal said, "Well, Jack, I am sorry you couldn't hold out one day longer." "Mr. Blank," said the boy with much feeling, "I was good on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and the teacher never said a word. This morning I turned round to find where the lesson was, and at once the teacher sent me down. Do you think that was fair?" And the principal said impulsively, "No, I don't."

Here was a sad example of lack of tact. That teacher spoiled everything. She could never do anything with the boy after that. She should not have noticed his turning round, even if it was against her regulations. If, on the other hand, she had said to him on Monday afternoon, "Well, you got through today all right," and on Tuesday afternoon, "Another good day," and Wednesday, "Three good ones," and on Thursday, "Only one more," and had overlooked the trifling offence of turning around, the boy would have come to the office on Friday afternoon in triumph. The few words of tactful encour-

agement, offered daily, would have given him renewed determination; would have stimulated his purpose to make a perfect record for one week; and this victory would have gone very far to make his good conduct permanent. But the teacher not only failed to assist his efforts from day to day by an approving word, but took the first occasion to demolish the character structure he was gradually building up unaided.

In a boys' boarding school during assembly exercises one morning some one stepped on a match and it ignited with a loud report. The teacher in charge said, "There is never any telling what you boys will do in the way of disorder. I suppose the next thing will be for you to fill your pockets with match heads and scatter them all over the floor!" None of the students had thought of doing anything of the kind until the teacher suggested it, but they promptly acted upon his idea; and in a few days the explosion of match heads made all semblance of order impossible.

The principal was then called in. He announced to the students that the following week he would grant a holiday so as to give all an opportunity to attend the county fair a few miles away. "But," he continued, "let us have no more match heads"; and order was at once restored.

A very considerable proportion of school difficulties that come up for decision to the State Commissioner of Education is caused by the fact that somebody somewhere failed to exercise good judgment. Such cases as the refusal of a foreign child to pledge allegiance to the American flag, or refusal of parents to permit a child to attend religious exercises at the

opening of school, can be quietly handled by a tactful teacher so that no unpleasant publicity will arise. When it is not necessary to bring things to an issue, a teacher is foolish to invite trouble.

Reaching so-called bad boys is more a matter of tact than of intelligence or of learning. By means of tact the teacher will avoid arousing their evil tendencies. She will not punish them in such a way as to cause excessive resentment. She will give them enough interesting work to permit them to give vent to their energies. She will fraternize with them, take an interest in their sports, be present at their match games, help them get up plays, and in many other ways skilfully appeal to the better side of their natures without saying anything about it. The favorite teacher in a high school is nearly always the one who plays tennis with the pupils, directs their dramatics, is a member of the "Camp-fire Girls" or "Boy Scouts," is enthusiastic at the baseball and basketball games, dances with them at their entertainments, and always has time to discuss with them matters in which they are interested. Such a teacher reaches more pupils than do ten others whose sole interest is in the subjects they teach. She has ten points of adjustment where the others have but one, and that of uncertain fit.

The teacher should first of all be a human being. She should be alive to the joys and sorrows that animate all children. As she contemplates their imperfections she should always think of her own also; and she should constantly strive to cultivate the habit of Franklin, to do the right thing at the right time.

## CHAPTER XX

### *REACHING THE CHILDREN THROUGH ENTHUSIASM*

There is no teaching until the pupil is brought in the same state or principle in which you are; a transfusion takes place; he is you, and you are he; there is a teaching; and by no unfriendly chance or bad company can he ever quite lose the benefit. — EMERSON.

"It is faith in something and enthusiasm for something that makes a life worth looking at." — HOLMES.

"Nothing great was ever accomplished without enthusiasm."

— EMERSON.

No teacher ever reached her pupils unless she possessed and put into her work some of that divine element called enthusiasm. This word is derived from the Greek and literally means "God in us." It was thought by the Greeks that when the eye of the poet or the orator rolled "in a fine frenzy," he was possessed of a god; and it is not far wrong for us to feel that a benignant spirit shines through the countenance of the enthusiastic man.

Enthusiasm has also been compared to fire, by means of which other fires are kindled. It has been called a contagious quality of the mind that is more catching than measles. There are other likenesses that have been used. However we think of this quality, the teacher cannot do without it if she is to make the most of her opportunities.

In a high school or college, students are sometimes for one period under a teacher who goes through her work as a matter of mere routine. The students may do their work fairly well, but there is no deep interest. No permanent love for the subject is likely to be engendered in any of them. The next period these same students meet a teacher who is full of inspiration. The very air is charged with electricity. The dullness of the preceding recitation gives way to life and energy. It does not seem to be the same student body; yet there has only been a change of teacher.

It is this enthusiasm that rouses the dull mind from its lethargy. The live teacher is continually "starting something," and that is very likely to "start somebody." The pupils catch the teacher's spirit. If her mind is aglow with enthusiasm it casts a light on a subject otherwise dull. If the teacher feels that her subject is of great importance, that it contains most fruitful ideas, and that she wants her pupils to gain the benefit and pleasure of these ideas, she will put her soul into her teaching, and the breath of life will cause the instruction to glow with interest.

Enthusiasm in teaching demands a love of children and a consequent desire to do them good. Aversion to children is utterly inconsistent with enthusiasm. It is not possible for a teacher to put her soul into any instruction of pupils she dislikes. Of course such a teacher has no proper place in the schoolroom; but unfortunately she is sometimes improperly there.

Enthusiasm in a subject demands a love for it. No teacher can do much with a subject she does not like. This is again an attitude inconsistent with the

best teaching. Hence the need of departmental work above the fifth or sixth grades, so that teachers may have only such subjects as they like best.

Enthusiasm requires scholarship. The well known instance of Dr. Thomas Arnold preparing himself every evening for teaching his class in beginning Latin is an instance in point. To teach with power there must be that confidence and certainty that comes only from broad and clear knowledge. The teacher can never make her pupils enthusiastic during a recitation if her own face is buried in the textbook; but if she can stand before the class without any book at all, and if possible without any notes, her very attitude will tend toward interest and enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm is aided by means of good health. There are some teachers of frail bodies who are almost consumed by their enthusiasm; and there are others of fine physique whose teaching is lifeless. But the true teacher is more apt to be enthusiastic if she is feeling well than if she is worn out. Some superintendents do not seem to take account of this fact, and they make so many requirements of their teachers in the way of records, reports, meetings and conferences of all kinds, that the teachers are too tired when they reach school in the morning to give their best selves to the work. Teachers have a duty toward their class in refraining from excessive work or social diversions; in seeing to it that they begin the day fresh and bright. The fagged out mind must be driven. Whatever enthusiasm is aroused is thus the result of force and not of natural spontaneity. It is unhealthy, and therefore likely to lead to ruin in the end.



Enthusiasm is promoted by pleasant living conditions. It is far better for a teacher to pay a higher sum for a room and board in a home she likes, than to pay a dollar a week less in a home she does not like. If her room is uncomfortably cold during the winter, her enthusiasm is very likely to be chilled. If she does not get tasteful and nourishing food, she cannot proceed with the energy that arises out of properly satisfied physical conditions. If the family life is discordant, or the children are annoying, the teacher cannot maintain a serene spirit. Hence when a teacher inquires for board, she should take great care to examine into conditions before she chooses. It is sometimes wise to engage board temporarily, and if necessary make a change afterwards, even if it leads to estrangement with the family. It is easier to bear this criticism than a year's discomfort.

Enthusiasm is promoted by attendance at a summer school for teachers. Usually the school year closes about June 20, and opens September 10. The summer vacation is therefore from ten to twelve weeks long. Summer school terms are usually five or six weeks in length. Therefore a teacher may attend a summer school for six weeks, and yet have from four to six weeks at her disposal for rest and recreation.

Things educational are moving so rapidly these days that the teacher who does not improve herself falls behind. School work is viewed from a totally different aspect from what it was even ten years ago. The standard of teaching required in good schools has risen rapidly since that time. Hence it behooves even the good teacher to get the new viewpoint; to learn

to see her work from a different angle; to seek the new elements that educational progress is introducing. This in itself will give the teacher a new interest in her work, and tend to maintain her enthusiasm.

But the finest influence of the summer school is in its spirit. This is hard to define. Those who have experienced it come back to their work with a "something" they never had before. It is not so much the instruction they have received as the air they have breathed that gives them the glow of enthusiasm, as they say, "Oh, it was fine!"

It is not intended that teachers should take so many courses that the summer school means work only. Two courses a day are sufficient. There is then time for rest, for recreation, and for social life. Thus the summer school may be a fine vacation, with just enough work to give the mind a valuable foundation for creative thinking. Those who have observed this summer school movement for a number of years will agree that its finest work is the spreading of enthusiasm among teachers, who in turn communicate it to their pupils, and thus *reach* them.

The joy that comes from the enthusiastic pursuit of one's vocation is one of the greatest blessings of life. "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." To such a person life is one long happy day. Its clouds but form the background for the golden gleams of the sunlight. This life is possible to the teacher who puts her soul into her work, and her influence for good in the lives of her pupils is immeasurable.





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